DEC.

Famous FANTASTIC Mysteries

25¢

EDISON MARSHALL'S

COMPELLING CLASSIC OF FANTASY

OGDEN'S STRANGE STORY

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Send Only $1

WE WILL SEND ANY ITEM YOU CHOOSE FOR APPROVAL UNDER OUR MONEY BACK GUARANTEE

New York's Largest Mail Order Jewelers Established 1878

SEND FOR FREE CATALOG

Simply indicate your selection on the coupon below and forward it with $1 and a brief note giving your age, occupation, and a few other facts about yourself. We will open an account for you and send your selection to you subject to your examination. If completely satisfied, pay the Expressman the required Down Payment and the balance in easy monthly payments. Otherwise, return your selection and your $1 will be refunded.

ELGIN

$107 42.50
Ladies 15 Jewel Elgin. Yellow rolled Gold plate case. Expansion band. Send $1, pay 3.25 after examination, 3.85 a month.

L136 45.00
Man's 15 Jewel Elgin. Yellow rolled gold plate case. Expansion band. Send $1, pay 3.50 after examination, 4.05 a month.

$243 71.50
Lady Elgin, 14K gold, 19 Jewels. Send $1, pay 6.15 after examination, 6.45 a month.

L228 71.50
Lord Elgin, 21 Jewels, 14K yellow Gold filled case. Send $1, pay 6.15 after examination, 6.45 a month.

A407/C204 $100
5 Diamond Engagement Ring, matching 5 Diamond Wedding Band. 14K yellow or 18K white Gold. Send $1, pay $9 after examination, $9 a month.

A203/C98 $55
5 Diamond Engagement Ring, matching 5 Diamond Wedding Band. 14K yellow or white Gold. Send $1, pay 4.50 after examination, 4.95 a month.

D403 $75
Man's Ring with 3 brilliant Diamonds. 14K yellow Gold. Send $1, pay 6.50 after examination, 7.50 a month.

F172 17.50
1 carat genuine Zircon, 4 gleaming side Zircons. 14K yellow or white Gold. Send $1, pay $1 after examination, $2 a month.

All Prices Include Federal Tax

SEND $1 WITH COUPON — PAY BALANCE OF DOWN PAYMENT AFTER EXAMINATION.

L. W. Sweet, 25 West 14th St. (Dept. P23)
New York 11, N. Y.

Enclosed find $1 deposit. Send me No._____
Price $_____. After examination, I agree to pay $_____ and required balance monthly thereafter until full price is paid, otherwise I'll return selection and you will refund my dollar.

NAME_____

ADDRESS_____

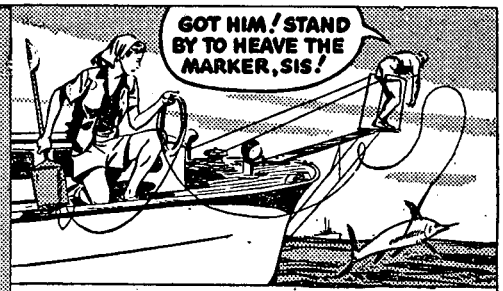
CITY_____ STATE_____

L. W. Sweet

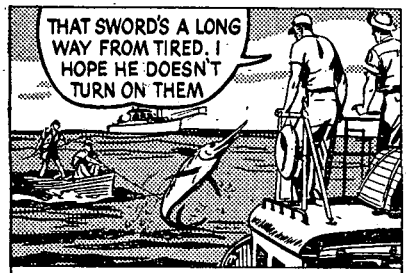
MAIL ORDER DIVISION FINLAY STRAUS, INC.
25 W. 14th St., NEW YORK 11, N. Y. Dept. P23

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

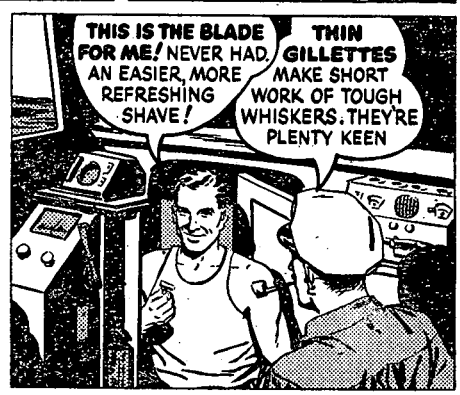
JOE HARPOONED A SWORDFISH, BUT THEN...



THEIR FAMILY CRUISER SPECIALLY FITTED WITH "PULPIT" AND "LOOKOUT," BETH BROWN AND HER BROTHER JOE, TRY THEIR LUCK AT HARPOONING A SWORDFISH...



THINKING THE HUGE FISH TIRED FROM DRAGGING THE MARKER, OUR HARPOONERS USE THEIR DORY TO CLOSE IN FOR THE KILL WHILE BILL BLANE AND HIS FRIEND WATCH THE SHOW...


THIS IS THE BLADE FOR ME! NEVER HAD AN EASIER, MORE REFRESHING SHAVE!
THIN GILLETTES MAKE SHORT WORK OF TOUGH WHISKERS. THEY'RE PLENTY KEEN

MEN, FOR BETTER-LOOKING SHAVES... QUICK AND SMOOTH... TRY AMERICA'S LARGEST-SELLING ECONOMY BLADES ...THIN GILLETTES. THEY'RE FAR KEENER THAN ORDINARY BLADES AND LAST FAR LONGER. FURTHER, THEY FIT YOUR GILLETTE RAZOR EXACTLY AND PROTECT YOU FROM NICKS AND IRRITATION. ASK FOR THIN GILLETTES IN THE 10-BLADE PACK WITH THE HANDY USED-BLADE COMPARTMENT
THIN Gillette 10 BLADES
10-25¢
4-10¢
NEW TEN-BLADE PACKAGE HAS COMPARTMENT FOR USED BLADES

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Famous FANTASTIC Mysteries

25¢

Vol. 11 DECEMBER, 1949 No. 2

Book-Length Novel

Ogden's Strange Story — **Edison Marshall** — **10**

Here's one of the strangest stories ever told—the saga of Ogden Rutheford, spoiled child of civilization, and Og, the Dawn Man. . . . Centuries away, worlds apart, they wove strange, dark tapestries into history's pages, until in a screaming holocaust their paths met and crossed. . . .

Copyright 1934 by Edison Marshall

No-Man's-Land — **John Buchan** — **82**

When he went delving into the last weird mysteries of earth spirits, he thought he had reckoned with every danger that superstition warned of. . . . But he forgot the fear-ridden, cringing cave man who dwelt deep inside himself.

Copyright 1946 by Susan Caroline Tweedsmuir.
First North American Magazine Rights purchased from the estate of the author.

What Was It? — **Fitz-James O'Brien** — **106**

They could feel and hear the Nameless Horror, but they could not see it. . . . They could have no doubt that it was present among them, but . . . what was it?

Jamieson — **Margaret St. Clair** — **114**

Woe be to him who spies upon the secrets of the half-world beneath our own . . . for though he may see what only few men know, so will he be punished as few men ever have been!

The Readers' Viewpoint — **6**

In the Next Issue — **111**

Masters of Fantasy — **Neil Austin** — **113**

Edgar Allan Poe—The Pit and the Pen—His Centenary

The New Lawrence Portfolio — **119**

Cover by Lawrence. Inside illustrations by Lawrence, Leydenfrost and Finlay.

Any resemblance between any character appearing in fictional matter, and any person, living or dead, is entirely coincidental and unintentional.

Published bi-monthly by All-Fiction Field, Inc., a subsidiary of Popular Publications, Inc., at 1125 E. Valle Ave., Kokomo, Indiana. Editorial and Executive Offices, 205 East 42nd Street, New York 17, N. Y. Henry Steeger, President and Secretary, Harold S. Goldsmith, Vice-President and Treasurer. Entered as second-class matter at the Post Office at Kokomo, Indiana.

Copyright 1949, by All-Fiction Field, Inc. This issue is published simultaneously in the Dominion of Canada. Copyright under International Copyright Convention and Pan-American Copyright Conventions. All rights reserved, including the right of reproduction, in whole or in part, in any form.

Single copy, 25c. Annual subscription for U.S.A., its possessions and Canada, $1.50; other countries 38c additional. All correspondence relating to this publication should be addressed to 1125 E. Valle Ave., Kokomo, Indiana or 205 E. 42nd Street, New York 17, N. Y. When submitting manuscripts, enclose stamped, self-addressed envelope for their return, if found unavailable. The publishers will exercise care in the handling of unsolicited manuscripts, but assume no responsibility for their return.

Printed in the U.S.A.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

MR. LONG... MR. SHORT, AND I ALL WEAR SIZE 40— WE BUY Lee FOR T.S.*

SLIM, STOUT, SHORT OR TALL Lee * Tailored Sizes FIT 'EM ALL!

Mr. Long and Mr. Short differ by 9 inches in height and the man in the middle is average . . . yet they all wear the same waist size. Lee Overalls fit them *comfortably* and *correctly* because exclusive Lee Tailored Sizes provide the *perfect* proportions throughout each garment.

Enjoy the *greater comfort, better fit and appearance* of Lee Tailored Sizes. When your Work Clothes are LEE you're sure of *longer wear . . . more washings per garment* and a Money-back Guarantee of Complete Satisfaction.

THE H. D. LEE COMPANY, INC.

Kansas City, Mo. • Minneapolis, Minn. • Trenton, N. J.
San Francisco, Calif. • South Bend, Ind. • Salina, Kans.

Sanforized for Permanent Fit

There's a LEE for Every Job

Overalls • Union-Alls • Matched Shirts and Pants • Dungarees
Riders (Cowboy Pants) • Overall Jackets

Buy Lee Work Clothes at Leading Stores Coast-to-Coast

Lee
WORK CLOTHES

COPYRIGHT 1949
THE H. D. LEE CO., INC.

WORLD'S LARGEST MANUFACTURER OF UNION-MADE WORK CLOTHES

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

WHAT EVERY AUTO MECHANIC WANTS TO KNOW

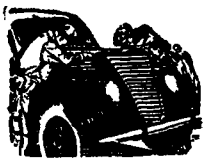
This Big Practical Book gives full information with working diagrams covering the principles, construction, ignition, service and repair of modern cars, trucks and buses.

Diesel Engines, Hydramatic and Fluid Drives Fully Explained.

A complete Guide of 1800 pages, with over 1500 illustrations showing inside views of the working parts, with instructions for service jobs.

IT PAYS TO KNOW

How to fit pistons—How to locate engine knocks—How to fit connecting rod bearings—How to service main bearings—How to recondition valves—How to time valves—How to adjust fan belts—How to adjust carburetors and chokes—How to rebuild a clutch—How to service automatic transmissions—How to service brakes—How to adjust steering gear—How to cope with ignition troubles—How to service distributors—How to time ignition—How to "tune up" an engine.



$4 COMPLETE • PAY $1 A MO. TO GET THIS ASSISTANCE FOR YOURSELF SIMPLY FILL IN AND MAIL COUPON TODAY.

Step up your own skill with the facts and figures of your trade. Audels Mechanics Guides contain Practical Inside Trade Information in a handy form, Fully illustrated and Easy to Understand. Highly Endorsed. Check the book you want for 7 DAYS FREE EXAMINATION. Send No Money, Nothing to pay Postman.

CUT HERE

MAIL ORDER

AUDEL, Publishers, 49 W. 23 St., NEW YORK 10, N. Y.

Please send me postpaid for FREE EXAMINATION books marked (x) below. If I decide to keep them I agree to mail $1 in 7 days on each book or set ordered and further mail $1 monthly on each book or set until I have paid price, otherwise I will return them.

- ☐ AUTO MECHANICS GUIDE, 1800 pages . . . $4
- ☐ DIESEL ENGINE MANUAL, 400 Pages 2
- ☐ WELDERS GUIDE, 400 Pages 1
- ☐ MACHINISTS Handy Book, 1600 Pages . . . 4
- ☐ POWER PLANT ENGINEERS Guide, 1500 Pages. 4
- ☐ ENGINEERS & FIREMANS EXAMS, 528 Pages. 1
- ☐ PUMPS, Hydraulics & Air Compressors, 1658 Pgs. 4
- ☐ MARINE ENGINEERS Handy Book, 1280 Pages 4
- ☐ ENGINEERS & Mechanics Guides (8 Book Set). 12
- ☐ Answers on Practical ENGINEERING, 254 Pages 1
- ☐ ELECTRIC WIRING DIAGRAMS, 210 Pages . . 1
- ☐ ELECTRICIANS EXAMINATIONS, 250 Pages. 1
- ☐ ELECTRICAL DICTIONARY, 9000 Terms . . . 2
- ☐ ELECTRIC MOTOR GUIDE, 1000 Pages 4
- ☐ HANDY BOOK OF ELECTRICITY, 1440 Pages 4
- ☐ ELECTRICAL POWER CALCULATIONS, 425 Pgs. 2
- ☐ RADIOMANS GUIDE, 975 Pages 4
- ☐ ELECTRONIC DEVICES, 216 Pages 2
- ☐ ELECTRIC LIBRARY, 7000 Pages (12 Book Set). 18
  Vols. I, II, III, IV, V, VI, VII, VIII, IX, X, XI, XII $1.50 Ea.
- ☐ OIL BURNER GUIDE, 384 Pages 1
- ☐ HOUSE HEATING GUIDE, 1000 Pages 4
- ☐ CARPENTERS & Builders Guides (4 Book Set). 5
- ☐ PLUMBERS & Steamfitters Guides (4 Book Set). 6
- ☐ MASONS & Builders Guides (4 Book Set) . . . 5
- ☐ BLUE PRINT READING, 416 Pages 2
- ☐ PAINTERS & DECORATORS MANUAL, 450 Pgs. 2
- ☐ GARDENERS & GROWERS Guides (4 Book Set). 6
- ☐ REFRIGERATION & Air Conditioning, 1280 Pgs. 4
- ☐ SHEET METAL WORKERS Handy Book, 388 Pgs. 1
- ☐ SHEET METAL PATTERN LAYOUTS, 1100 Pgs. 4
- ☐ AIRCRAFT WORKER, 240 Pages 1
- ☐ MECHANICAL DRAWING GUIDE, 160 Pages. 1
- ☐ MECHANICAL DRAWING & DESIGN, 480 Pgs. 2
- ☐ MATHEMATICS & CALCULATIONS, 700 Pgs.. 2
- ☐ MECHANICAL Dictionary, 968 Pages 4
- ☐ MILLWRIGHTS & Mechanics Guide, 1260 Pgs. 4

Check NOW!

You Can Look Over Any Guide In Your Own Home — Start the Easy Payments If Satisfied

MAIL THIS TODAY

Name_____

Address_____

Occupation_____ P.F.G.

Employed by_____

The Readers' Viewpoint

Address comments to the Letter Editor, Famous Fantastic Mysteries, All-Fiction Field, Inc., 205 E. 42nd St., New York 17, New York.

Famous Fantastic Mysteries, 1950

Dear Readers:

1950 seems to your editor to be a cosmic sounding date. We were close onto 1940 when we began this magazine—and of course out of necessity, it had to be sent to the printer at the very close of 1939 to be started in the universe in 1940. Anyway, we are a cosmic entity, and we are dealing just now in dates of cosmic significance.

Now, in the middle of the twentieth century, we belong to that small but stubbornly surviving literary group who have dared to prophesy the unbelievable—a short time before it happened. Not that we would exactly wish to sponsor the Atomic Age, if we could, but that we wish to assert ourselves as belonging to that branch of fiction (?) which felt its foetid breath of Doom ahead of time. If anything, we would prefer to be affiliated with the more brotherly activities of mankind. . . . Our purpose in existing is to furnish happy entertainment and escape from the duress of those exigencies of life which are necessary to keep the greater happiness alive. From our readers' letters, it would seem that we have succeeded signally.

This issue, we feel, is a rather fine one. "Ogden's Strange Story" is an entertaining merger of the present and past, and well written by an experienced and sympathetic author, Edison Marshall. The short novelette represents one of the cleverest storytellers of a generation just past, John Buchan, who was the author of the famous "The Thirty-nine Steps." The next issue beckons with

(Continued on page 8)

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THOUSANDS NOW PLAY

who never thought they could!

Thrilled by Playing

I've had my lessons just a week. I think your course is super. I was more thrilled than words can express when I found I could actually play America, The Merry Widow Waltz and others.
*J. T., Mancelona, Mich.

Wouldn't Take $1000 for Course

The lessons are so simple that anyone can understand them. I have learned to play by note in a little more than a month. I wouldn't take a thousand dollars for my course. *S. E. A., Kansas City, Mo.

Shares Course With Sister

The teaching is so interesting and the pieces so beautiful I couldn't ask for anything better. I recommend your course highly. My sister shares it with me and feels the same way.
*D. E. G., Wausau, Wisc.

Finding New Joy

I am finding a new joy that I never experienced before, for I *have always wanted to play*, but had given up hope until I heard of your course.
*C. S. Lucien, Okla.

Plays After 2 Months

I hesitated before sending for your course because of an earlier experience I had with a course by *ear from another company. I am* playing pieces now I never dreamed I would play after only two months.
*E. T. Prichard, Ala.

*Actual pupils' names on request. *Pictures by professional models.*

You, too, can play any instrument By this EASY A-B-C Method

YOU think it's difficult to learn music? That's what thousands of others have thought! Just like you, they long to play some instrument—the piano, violin, guitar, saxophone or other favorites. But they denied themselves the pleasure—because they thought it took months and years of tedious study to learn.

Learn in Spare Time at Home

And then they made an amazing discovery! They learned about a wonderful way to learn music at home—without a private teacher—without tedious study—and in a surprisingly short time. They wrote to the U. S. School of Music for the facts about this remarkable short-cut method. And the facts opened their eyes! They were amazed to find how easy it was to learn.

The result? Over 850,000 men and women have studied music at home this simple, A-B-C way. Now, all *over the world, enthusiastic* music-lovers are enjoying the thrilling satisfaction of creating their own music. They have found the key to good times, popularity and profit.

Costs only few cents a Day

And that's what you can do, right now. Get the proof that you, too, can learn to play your favorite instrument — *quickly, easily, in* spare time at home for only a few cents a day. Never mind if you have no musical knowledge or talent. Just read the fascinating booklet and Print and Picture sample that explain all about the U. S. School method. (Instruments supplied when needed, cash or credit.) Tear out the coupon now, before you turn the page.

U. S. School of *Music*, 36712 Brunswick Bldg., New York 10, N.Y. (51st year)

FREE!

Print and Picture *Sample*

NOTICE

Please don't confuse our method with any systems claiming to teach "without music" or "by ear". We teach you easily and quickly to play real music, any music by standard notes — not by any trick or number system.

U. S. SCHOOL OF MUSIC,
36712 Brunswick Bldg., New York 10, N. Y.

I am interested in music study, particularly in the instrument checked below. Please send me your free illustrated booklet "How to Learn Music at Home", and your free Print and Picture Sample.

Piano	*Saxophone*	*Clarinet*	*Practical*
Guitar	Trumpet, Cornet	Trombone	Finger
Hawaiian	Reed Organ	Flute	Control
Guitar	Tenor Banjo	Modern	Piccolo
Violin	Ukulele	Elementary	Mandolin
Piano Accordion		Harmony	

Mr.
Miss.....Have you
Mrs. (Please print) Instrument?.....

Address.....

City..... State.....

NOTE: If you are under 16 years of age, parent must sign coupon.

SAVE 2c — STICK COUPON ON PENNY POSTCARD

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

(Continued from page 6)

"Morning Star" by that long recognized master whom age does not wither nor custom stale—H. Rider Haggard.

Sincerely,
MARY GNAEDINGER.

A Marvelous Adventure

Dear Mary Gnaedinger:

"The Readers' Viewpoint" was quite crowded in August; keep that policy up. Some letters were very interesting. Most were too short.

May I ask Mr. Harold Keating just where one can obtain a good copy of Burroughs' "The Tarzan Twins" or "The Mucker" for a dollar—for less than three or four dollars?

I wonder just how long R. J. Banks, Jr. has been reading fantasy. He should realize that F.F.M. won't print stories from mags. Furthermore, the stories he mentioned by Phillips and Kuttner were published only two years ago, or even less.

Well, what do you know! I agree with a horror fan! Is that not sacrilege, Mr. Clark, to loath "Dracula" as much . . . well, as much as I do? Oh, well, I've been reconciled to an occasional horror story—especially if by Bradbury. Clark wants a number.

How about some science-fiction? If I remember correctly, you haven't ever given us a real science-fiction story in F.F.M.; not since I've been reading, anyway. The only possible exception to that is "The Purple Sapphire".

In my last letter I said quite a lot about how F.F.M. was deteriorating. I take it all back. How someone who committed "The City of Wonder" monstrosity could put together such a marvelous adventure tale, I could not venture to guess. But Vivian did it! Yessir (or rather, yes ma'am), he certainly did it, in writing "Valley of Silent Men."

And so did Lawrence when he painted that cover. No Finlay cover ever exceeded it. (Finlay Fans Nos. 1 and 2, be quiet!)

As for the inside pics, Lawrence's were all satisfactory, though none could touch Finlay. May I suggest Lawrence on the cover, and Finlay and Bok on the inside . . . Cartier if he can be gotten?

As for Bok . . . his illustrations are remarkably like those of Cartier, though slightly different. He has a style just as distinctly his own as Cartier's and Finlay's are their own. And it's a good style. An excellent one. I'm glad to see him in F.F.M. again . . . but a word or two of criticism. The pic on 111. The monsters, of course, are supposed to resemble Ordway's. But where, oh where, are those teeth? I see none.

The style of "The Valley of Silent Men" was very, very good; not outstanding, but good, as if Vivian had put a lot of work into it. Of course, the plot, in main points, is nothing new, probably was not at the time or writing, but still it was a good *adventure* story. There was as much fantasy or stf in the tale as there is gold in a liter of sea water . . . just sufficient to whet the appetite.

Mrs. St. Clair has written a good short story. If she can continue to do this, more power to her.

I never heard of the story destined for these pages next month, and I seriously doubt whether anyone else did either. But, well, if you say it's good. . . .

Glad to see your little note, Miss Editor, in "The Reader's Viewpoint." Can it be hoped that same might grow into an editor's page?

Revive *Astonishing!*

W. PAUL GANLEY.

119 Ward Road,
North Tonawanda, N. Y.

All Excellent

I have been reading Famous Fantastic Mysteries for a good many years, and since it came out, *Fantastic Novels*. I want to say that I enjoy both mags very much.

The last three stories that I have read: "Dian," "Purple Cloud," and now "Silent Men," have all been very excellent and I enjoyed them very much. Keep up the good work.

Two stories I would like published are, "Dream Quest of Unknown Kadath"—HPL, and "The Blind Spot" series by Hall and Flint.

I'm tired of chasing copies of your two wonderful magazines, so am enclosing a postal note for $3.00 for a year's subscription to both F.F.M. and F.N.

ROBERT MURPHY.

Father Flanagan's Boys' Home,
Boys' Town, Nebraska.

Vivian Story "Excellent"

Knowing no way of saying in an original and witty fashion, "This is my first letter to a prozine", I'll assume it said and get down to business—to wit, the August, 1949, issue of F.F.M.

First, of course, is the novel, "Valley of Silent Men", by Vivian: excellent.

St. Clair's "Counter Charm" was a pleasant story, easily read, enjoyed, and forgotten. Best thing about it was Bok's pic.

More poetry, please, with some illustrated by Finlay. And while we're on the subject, how about poetry by Lovecraft, Merritt, and C. A. Smith?

In closing, let me say that Austin, Lawrence, and Bok were all wonderful; not a poor picture in the book.

JAMES ZWIRNER.

1163 Hague Ave.,
St. Paul 4, Minn.

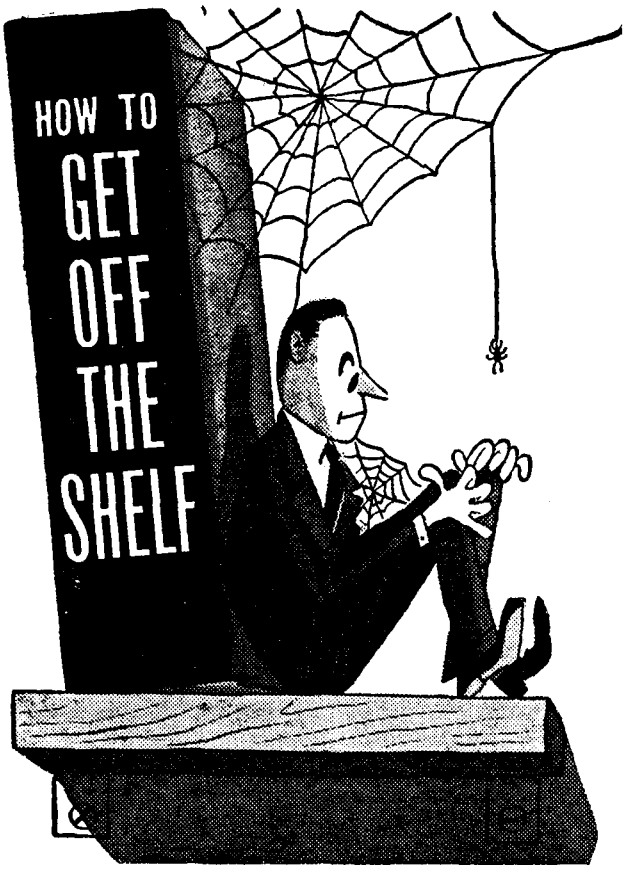
Asking A Favor

I just finished reading the August issue of F.F.M., and "The Valley of Silent Men" was, without a doubt, one of the best I've read in a long, long time. The story dragged a bit in parts but only whetted one's appetite to learn more of what was to happen later on in the story—so—I label it elegant in all respects.

"The Counter Charm" was also good. It had a humorous though unexpected and horrible ending, and was quite interesting.

(Continued on page 118)

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



ONE or two promotions . . . several pay raises . . . and then that long, long stretch "on the shelf." You want to keep on climbing. You want to feel that you are getting somewhere. But how?

I. C. S. can show you. A little more training could be all you need to get back in the *upswing*. An advanced course or a "refresher" —studied in your spare time—will help prepare you for the next step, will show that you are ready to handle more responsibility, a better job.

Trained men get the "breaks"! That's a fact proved over and over again by the records of former I. C. S. students.

You don't want to bog down in your job. You don't want to remain "on the shelf" with the untrained. Mail the coupon today for complete information on how you can join the steady climbers.

INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOLS

APPROVED under the G.I. BILL

BOX 3275-C, SCRANTON 9, PENNA.

Without cost or obligation, please send me full particulars about the course BEFORE which I have marked X:

Air Conditioning and Plumbing Courses
- ☐ Air Conditioning
- ☐ Heating ☐ Plumbing
- ☐ Refrigeration ☐ Steam Fitting

Chemical Courses
- ☐ Chemical Engineering
- ☐ Chemistry, *Analytical*
- ☐ Chemistry, Industrial
- ☐ Chemistry, Mfg. Iron & Steel
- ☐ Petroleum Refining ☐ Plastics
- ☐ Pulp and Paper Making

Civil Engineering, Architectural and Mining Courses
- ☐ Architecture
- ☐ Architectural Drafting
- ☐ Bridge and Building Foreman
- ☐ Building Estimating
- ☐ Civil Engineering
- ☐ Coal Mining
- ☐ Contracting and Building
- ☐ Highway Engineering
- ☐ Lumber Dealer
- ☐ Reading Structural Blueprints
- ☐ Sanitary Engineering
- ☐ Structural Drafting
- ☐ Structural Engineering
- ☐ Surveying and Mapping

Communications Courses
- ☐ Electronics
- ☐ Practical Telephony
- ☐ Radio, General ☐ Radio Operating
- ☐ Radio Servicing ☐ Television
- ☐ *Telegraph Engineering*

Electrical Courses
- ☐ Electrical Drafting
- ☐ Electrical Engineering
- ☐ Electric Light and Power
- ☐ Lighting Technician
- ☐ Practical Electrician

Internal Combustion Engines Courses
- ☐ Auto Technician ☐ Aviation
- ☐ Diesel-Electric
- ☐ Diesel Engines ☐ Gas Engines

Mechanical Courses
- ☐ Aeronautical Engineer's, Jr.
- ☐ Aircraft Drafting ☐ Flight Engineer
- ☐ Forging ☐ Foundry Work
- ☐ Heat Treatment of Metals
- ☐ Industrial Engineering
- ☐ Industrial Instrumentation
- ☐ Industrial Metallurgy
- ☐ Machine Shop ☐ Mech. Drafting
- ☐ Mechanical Engineering
- ☐ Mold-Loft Work
- ☐ Pattermaking—Wood, Metal
- ☐ Reading Shop Blueprints
- ☐ Sheet-Metal Drafting
- ☐ *Sheet-Metal Worker*
- ☐ Ship Drafting ☐ Ship Fitting
- ☐ Tool Designing ☐ Toolmaking
- ☐ Welding Engineering
- ☐ Welding—Gas and Electric

Railroad Courses
- ☐ Air Brake ☐ Car Inspector
- ☐ Diesel Locomotive
- ☐ Locomotive Engineer
- ☐ Locomotive Fireman
- ☐ Locomotive Machinist
- ☐ Railroad Section Foremen
- ☐ Steam-Diesel Loco. Eng.

Stationary Eng'r'g Courses
- ☐ Boilermaking
- ☐ Combustion Engineering
- ☐ Engine Running
- ☐ Marine Engineering
- ☐ Power Plant Eng'r'g ☐ Steam Engr.

Textile Courses
- ☐ Cotton Manufacturing
- ☐ Loom Fixing ☐ Rayon Weaving
- ☐ Textile Designing
- ☐ Woolen Manufacturing

Business and Academic Courses
- ☐ Accounting ☐ Advertising
- ☐ App. Psychology ☐ Bookkeeping
- ☐ Business Administration
- ☐ Bus. Correspondence ☐ Bus. Law
- ☐ Certified Public Accounting
- ☐ Commercial ☐ Commercial Art
- ☐ Cost Accounting
- ☐ Federal Tax ☐ First Year College
- ☐ *Foremanship* ☐ *French*
- ☐ Good English ☐ High School
- ☐ Higher Mathematics ☐ Illustration
- ☐ Industrial Supervision
- ☐ Motor Traffic ☐ Postal Civil Service
- ☐ Retailing ☐ Retail Bus. Management
- ☐ Salesmanship ☐ Secretarial
- ☐ Sign Lettering
- ☐ Spanish ☐ Stenography
- ☐ Traffic Management

Name_____ Age_____ Home Address_____

City_____ State_____ Working Hours_____ A.M. to_____ P.M.

Present Position_____ Employed by_____

Length of Service in World War II_____

Enrollment under G.I. Bill approved for World War II Veterans. Special tuition rates to members of the Armed Forces.
Canadian residents send coupon to International Correspondence Schools Canadian, Ltd., Montreal, Canada.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Ogden's Strange Story

By

Edison Marshall

Here's one of the strangest stories ever told—the saga of Ogden Rutheford, spoiled child of civilization, and Og, the Dawn Man. . . . Centuries away, worlds apart, they wove strange, dark tapestries into history's pages, until in a screaming holocaust their paths met and crossed. . . .

CHAPTER I

THE SPELL OF THE BIRD-GOD

FRITZ, the Swedish cook of the outfit, started the whole thing. One night when camp was made and the dark lay whispering beyond the fire, he turned to the professor with an odd, puzzled look in his clear blue Northland eyes.

"Professor," he said, out of a clear sky, "what's dis t'eory of evolution I hears so much about?"

Thereupon, the professor began the story. He told it to us off and on for a week. We heard it at our noon rests, in the fire gleam at night, and even in the cold dark, when we lay in a row in our sleeping bags. And because it was an adventure story of the present day, all the men listened to it with apparent pleasure.

But it was something more than an adventure story. Perhaps, in a way, it was the answer to Fritz's question. Therefore, I have tried to write it down, as near as possible to the way that the professor told it.

To those who read it just for the story, I'll have to apologize for some of the professor's opinions. According to the books on novel writing, personal opinions have no business in fiction. But was the tale fiction? None of us could say—we only knew that the professor was a truthful man, that he spoke to us in a singularly intense tone of voice, and that he used language rarely heard in our hunting yarns. Maybe the story is true—at least in its larger sense.

So it begins:

Dawn glimmered in the forest. The wild creatures were still abroad, and absorbed in their furtive occupations. The wolf hurried his feast so that he might steal back to his lair before bright day. The bull moose, black, ungainly, still wallowed in the marsh, feeding on lily roots. The woodland stirred and rustled from many little feet; the shadows quivered and crept.

It was the epilogue of the desperate drama of the night, and the actors had not yet left the stage.

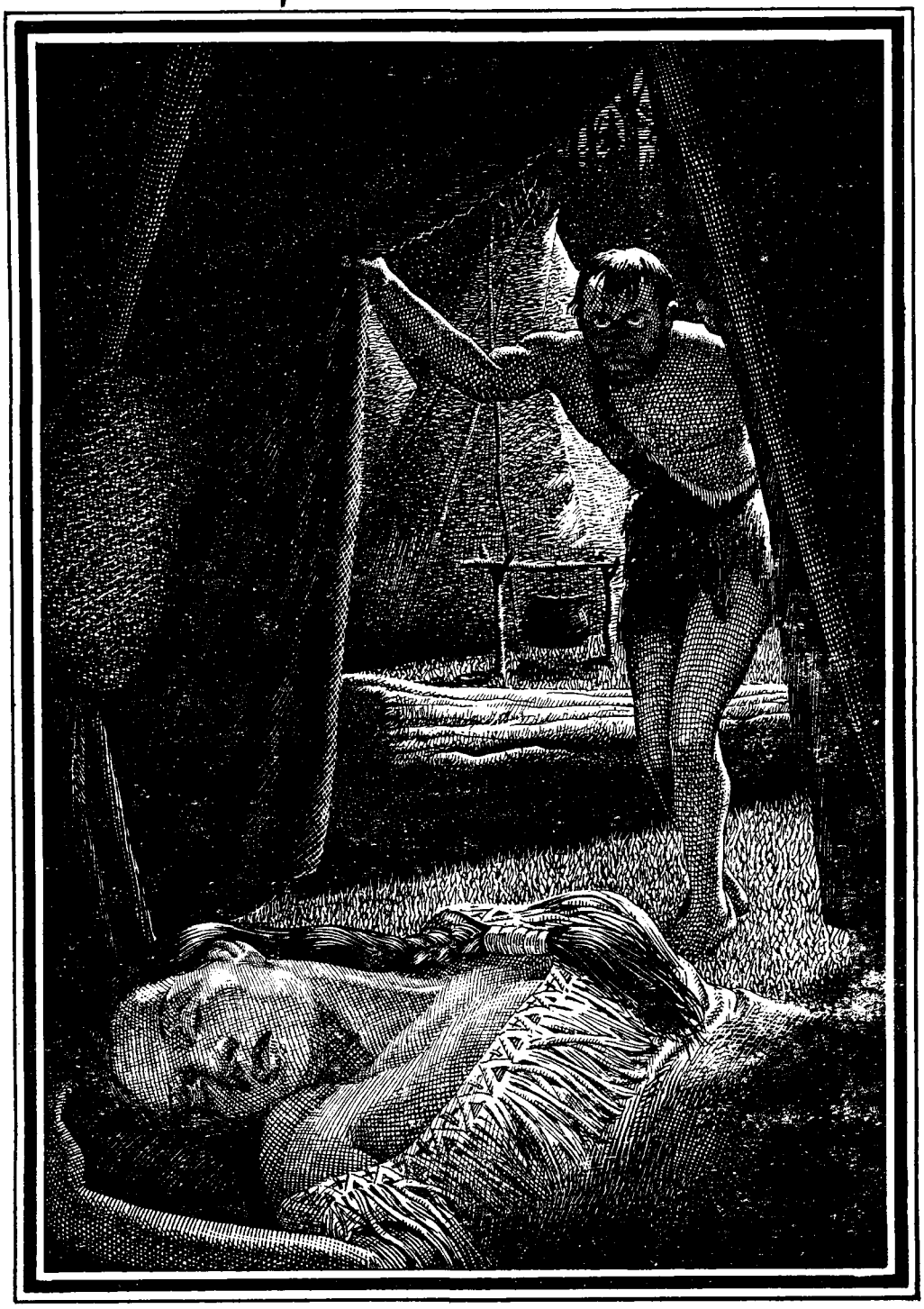
Suddenly all this life abruptly ceased. The tiny whispering sounds were chopped off short; the stealthy feet grew still. The moose froze to a form in bronze against the dark water. The wolf lifted her head, her red mouth open, her lean form tense and stark, blending like a shadow into the gray background. The long vale of spruce was like a petrified forest, a desert of black stone from which all living things had departed.

Danger, danger, danger—this was the

Copyright 1934 by Edison Marshall

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

He crept as noiselessly as his own shadow, under the moon. . . .



PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

warning. It was not sound, not sight, not even smell, yet it was in the air; it wirelessed into every beast-brain. Run away, Fleetfoot! Slink off, Gray Shadow! Crouch down and be still, little Gray Fur! Growl and raise your hackles in vain, Big-Belly-on-Man's Feet! Peril is on the wing.

There was a new stir in the air. It was wind, but not the dawn wind, calling them from their shadowy pursuits; it had never blown upon this forest since the beginning of the world. They knew the winds of heaven better than a sailor. Their very lives were rhymed with the breathings of the forest. It was the tidings on the breeze that called them to their food and to their matings, that identified their enemies and guided them on their migrations. But this wind they did not know. Accompanying it was a hoarse tattoo that grew to a roar like thunder. No wonder the wild things broke at last in frantic terror. The big moose leaped from his pond and lunged, crashing, through the aspens. The wolf whisked away like so much smoke between the trees.

So it turned out that the lords of the forest—the larger beasts that walked boldly in the trails—were never to spy the thing that had alarmed them. Yet it did not go by unseen. There were certain little animals that did not flee, that ducked and hid in heavy thickets; and to these came a wonderful sight. Peering up through the brushwood they saw what seemed a gigantic bird. It was flying just above the tree-tops—big as a hundred eagles, gray as a night-hawk, and swift as a falcon.

No wonder that the fool-hen, whose motley is a dash of red over her ear, huddled on her branch! Quaking, she waited for the clutch of mighty talons. Even the more intelligent creatures could not identify this winged thing. Their only memory of such beings was so faint and so far removed that it was only an echo in their strange, animal souls. Yes, long and long ago such giant birds had soared through the heavens; their wings had whipped and whined over the fetid marshes of the earth's dawn. Perhaps these little folk thought the monster was a pterodactyl, risen again after ten thousand centuries of sleep.

But it was not a pterodactyl. The last of these huge flying reptiles had left his tracks in the ancient rock. It was another flying mechanism, hardly less efficient—a masterpiece of man rather than of nature. It was an airplane.

There were two men in the plane. One was the pilot, a type to be seen on every flying field. He had keen, bright eyes, a nervous, active body. Three hundred years before he would have been a gentleman-adventurer on the Spanish Main, peering out from the crow's-nest in search of a prize. Fifty years before he would have ridden a lean horse in advance of an emigrant train, and his sharp gaze would have searched for smoke on the sky-line, or a feather in the thicket. Eight years before, as a boy just out of high school, he himself had been a lookout for an army.

His companion, evidently a passenger, seemed an entirely different type. He was ten years older than the pilot—and centuries younger. There were no lines about this young mouth, no reckless look at his tight lips. There was no rich, strong taste of raw life in his mouth. One wondered that he should be here, participating in this gallant flight on this humming ship, over these vast, unpeopled wastes.

Certainly he was not an adventurer. He was tall, powerful and fit, but his body had a smooth finish gained in a gymnasium rather than the outdoors. Unlike those who have fought for their lives against wind and wave under adventure's banner, he was smug and complacent, well pleased with himself and all his works. Indeed, he was inclined to look down on all adventurers—and such men who let their bold hearts rule their foolish heads—with lofty amusement.

In reality, he was amusing himself. He represented a class that had risen to prominence since the war, and in this year, 1926, was quite at its worst—a solemn-talking, self-important lot who called themselves "young intellectuals." Like the others, he talked wisely on realism, Freudism, Babbittism, and many other topics which would have bored to curses his companion in the plane. Yet in one way he deserved great credit. Unlike many of his fellow members of the so called intelligence, his talk and beliefs were sincere.

OGDEN RUTHEFORD really believed that he was a superman. His superiority lay, he believed, in a great discerning mind. He was teacher's pet of modern civilization, unshackled by the sentimentalities, conventions, and prejudices of the past.

Up with the times and ahead of them, naturally he employed modern means of travel. Today's circumstances were simple enough. He had been invited to join a party of friends who were touring Alaska and the Yukon. He had been unable to

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

start with the others, business having called him to Edmonton; but by hiring an airplane, he hoped to overtake the party at White Horse. The flight was to require only ten hours, seven of which had already passed.

Of course he did not expect to like the North. He believed that the stirring tales of the Yukon were merely legends which he, an intellectual, could expose. Only because his fiancée, Ruth Prentiss, was to be a member of the party had he consented at last to come. Of all the girls he knew, Ruth Prentiss was best fitted, he thought, to marry him. She was white-limbed, slim, and ashen-haired; and her fine mind could run along with his.

The airplane trip itself he had found rather pleasant. Although he had been afraid in the sweep and rush of taking-off, he was not without courage, and soon conquered his fears. The woods below were pleasantly green; the air was fresh and cool. . . . But the size of those woods troubled him a little. It did not fit in with one of his favorite beliefs—that the Wild had been tamed, the big game shot out and the land settled by farmers. He had yet to learn that except for little strips and edges, the North was as savage, as primal, as unspoiled as when the mammoths battled in Central Park.

Yet his spirits rose steadily. A queer sort of exultation was sweeping over him. It was good to go hurling through the air, a hundred miles an hour, over the still woods. It was subtly flattering; he was master not only of the plane and the pilot, but of space and time; he could oversee the little round earth. Bending down, he flicked its last smudge of dust from his glossy boot.

His keen eyes brightened, his face flushed. Why, he was Ogden Rutheford, favorite son of civilization, flower of the twentieth century. Exalted, he looked up to the blue dome of the sky, and did not see the fog bank that came drifting in over the hills.

The light suddenly dimmed. Instantly the world dissolved into a gray blur—formless as in the unutterable Beginnings, before the stars were lit in the sky. Rutheford was violently startled. His proud thoughts were eclipsed like the light itself, and his mind was a chill, dark void.

Somehow, this mist seemed aimed at him. It closed around him softly, gently, but gray, cold, implacable as death. His will surged in vain. He could not escape. He could not see. . . .

He had believed solely in intellect and denied all other gods, but now his brain was dulled by a child's terror, and all the gods he had ever dreamed flew in the fog beside him. He looked to the pilot for solace. Plainly the man considered this midday darkness merely part of the day's work. He betrayed no excitement; calmly he was nosing up. The plane began to rise.

But it was not given time. A black shadow, like a bone seen by X-ray, loomed in the mist.

It rushed nearer. It took the outline of a mountain crest. And then blackness seemed to lunge at Ogden Rutheford and overwhelm him. A great crashing sound leaped out into the silent wilds—echoed—undulated—wavered—died away.

BESIDE the broken wing of a wrecked airplane lay a man who had once been Ogden Rutheford. His hair was strangely matted; his face was streaked with what looked like red paint. He was not dead, though perhaps he had suffered a change hardly less than death.

He got up presently, reeled, and fell. He was delirious; but what were his dreams neither he, nor any other man, will ever know. Again he rose, crashed through the underbrush for a short distance—and fell again. Then there was a long period—practically twenty-four hours—that he slept and day-dreamed by turns while he lay between life and death.

In this period his brain did its best to straighten him out. Yet there was a blank spot somewhere. It failed to identify him as Ogden Rutheford; and indeed, at first it could not place him at all. It was all a baffling confusion. But as he slept, his dreams ran on, trying to account for him and his presence here. At last, making the most of such ancient writings as they found beneath the dust on his broken tablets of memory, they evolved an individual, a new ego, that could carry on in Ogden Rutheford's body.

His tangled dreams began to make sense. He dreamed that he was a hunter in a new, green, trackless forest. He wore the skins of beasts; he had never seen a house, a fence, or a plowed field. He had lain down and gone to sleep in the open, careless of danger. Even now he was lying in the very heart of a danger-haunted woodland; and at this very moment some white-fanged enemy might be stalking him, to leap upon him in his helplessness and slay him while he slept. There was a noise in the brush—

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

At this point in his dream, the man who had once been Ogden Rutheford—in an existence so far remote that this wild hunter could not imagine it—wakened with a start. And now he was no longer dazed and helpless. That period had passed. Total amnesia had wiped clean the slate of his lifetime memories, but a rich storehouse of experience remained. Some mind infinitely older, in some ways wiser, than the now-darkened mind of Ogden Rutheford, took command of his body.

At once he began to live. Not dully, not stupidly, but with an animal-like precision he began to react to his surroundings. Whoever this wild hunter was, he possessed most of his faculties. He was not just a wounded wreck of Ogden Rutheford, trying to carry out the latter's former habits of thought and action. Ogden Rutheford and all his life's works were utterly forgotten. Straightened out and oriented by his dreams, this wakening wild creature immediately struck out for himself.

He was not surprised to find himself alive. He had been living, cramped, darkened and chained, in the back part of Ogden Rutheford's brain, ever since the latter was born. Before that time, he had been living in the back-brains of Ogden Rutheford's ancestors, long before the first tribes moved westward of Asia. And even before that he had lived, in immemorial centuries of which men have no record. He was almost as old as the hills. He was the wild hunter; and his habits, ideas, knowledge and faculties had been handed down, generation by generation, from a beginning so remote that it could hardly be imagined, much less remembered.

Of course he took himself for granted. Any puzzling he might have done had been cleared up by his dreams. He took life and circumstances for granted, too, as any child does. He was rather like a child in many ways, yet he possessed the wisdom of a thousand centuries.

At once this racial wisdom began to guide him, the long coaching of the ages taking the place of such twentieth-century learning as Ogden Rutheford had acquired in his own lifetime. It was all simple, easy and natural.

He merely obeyed his instincts. Indeed, he had no other guide.

Waking, he instantly sprang to his feet. He was like a stunned duck that comes to life on the game heap of a hunter. His leg muscles seemed to hurl him upward to a position of sharp and alert guard.

This in itself was enough to show the great change that had overcome Ogden Rutheford. The latter had usually drifted awake, yawning, secure in his civilized surroundings. Only on occasions of violent nightmare had he sprung up with such a glare in his eyes and such a tenseness of his muscles. And there was no nightmare now. His baffling dreams of a few hours before had all been straightened out. He had been sleeping lightly, as such woodsmen and hunters as himself must sleep if they hope to live on. A sound as real as himself had wakened him.

He did not know yet what it was. It sounded like a crash of brush under a heavy body. Anyway, no sound that the forests uttered must be ignored. This was the law, which he knew well. And he must obey it.

He was not rigid or frozen with fear, but efficient as a wakened dog. His eyes roved here and there under his knitted brows and blood-matted hair. His legs were bent a little at the knees. And his arms—what is this about his arms? They were raised above his head, his hands open, his fingers spread apart and curled.

There was something significant here, had he the wits to see it. Ogden Rutheford, unkenned and forgotten now, had twice in his lifetime struck this same posture, both times as result of terror. Once he had met a hold-up man on a bridge. Another time a white curtain had fluttered suddenly in a close, dark room, almost frightening him out of his wits. On both of these occasions his hands had groped into the air this same way.

TRUE, the posture had served no purpose then. Rutheford had supposed he had merely lost his head. He had not known that most men, and nearly all women, throw their arms into the air when terror strikes. Now a strange light was thrown upon this queer, human trick. Rutheford had not known what he was doing, but this savage knew. Through instinct or intuition, he was simply trying to grasp a tree limb, where he might swing himself out of danger.

There was blessed refuge, concealment and deliverance, in the green branches! Ancient knowledge returned to him in great magic-lantern flashes, out of the murk of the past. He could remember, in some marvelous memory which was just now waking in his soul, a thousand woodland adventures in which the trees had befriended him. He had gone swinging through the branches. He had swept like

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a huge squirrel from bough to bough. He remembered the rush of air as he leaped, the shock and jar as his hard hand grasped a limb; the leaping earth as he fell and saved himself, just in time. Those who were tardy in swinging up did not survive; they died horribly, to the sound of crunching fangs in the red-spattered thicket.

Like memories had visited Ogden Rutheford, but his conscious mind had barred its doors against them, and they had spoken to him only through tangled dreams of endlessly climbing, endlessly falling. But when he fell, he never struck the ground. There was never any memory of striking the ground. His ancestors who had failed to catch themselves in time had not survived to pass it down.

But this brute-man did not swing into the tree. His terror quickly passed. The living thing that had aroused him—whose loud step had called him from his dreams—was not one of the great beasts of prey, the white-fanged hunters of the greenwood. It was not a tiger, tawny and terrible, not a cave bear, not a wolf. It was only a moose, now dashing off through the aspens.

The man watched the beast curiously. His red-streaked brow wrinkled and lowered as he peered. Plainly he was puzzled by the animal's behavior. Of course the moose himself he knew well. As a hunter, he had chased Great-Horns more times than he could count.

Of course he did not go back to sleep. He knew perfectly well that to lie in the open, unprotected, was simply death, certain and swift. He could not understand why he had been so reckless before.

Nor could he remember lying down here.

Peering about him in search of other animals, he was not at all surprised to find himself in the deep woods. Indeed, he could remember no other hunting ground. The country looked entirely natural and familiar—the shadows, the fallen logs, the clumps of brushwood, and the ambushes of the hunters were just as they were before he had fallen asleep. But he did not seem to recall this exact spot. He did not believe he had ever been just here before. Of course he wasn't sure; the past was dim as a dream in his mind.

He started up the ridge. He moved lightly and easily. Indeed, there was a curious automatic smoothness about all his acts, unknown to the forgotten creature who had been Ogden Rutheford. When a log

DESIGNED FROM THE INSIDE OUT TO GIVE MORE HOURS OF BRIGHT LIGHT

Sealed in Steel and Plastic with the tough plastic outer casing and the steel cap machine-sealed directly into the battery top to prevent power loss.

Modern in Styling with functional design that results in sleek, attractive appearance and added protection by more effectively insulating the zinc can. The engineering skill and know-how that has made BURGESS first choice of scientists and explorers for years has now created another first for flashlight users everywhere.

Engineered Design of this new construction permits the use of a maximum amount of energy producing raw materials to make a big, full-size battery with longer life.

Chrome Protection keeps BURGESS fresh and ready longer because it curbs interior action in the battery when your flashlight is not in use.

Buy these new BURGESS Flashlight Batteries NOW—at better dealers everywhere!

Plainly Dated to assure you that every BURGESS Flashlight Battery is fresh and strong.

Guaranteed by the maker whose reputation for quality and dependability has made BURGESS the foremost name in radio batteries.

BURGESS

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

crossed his trail, he leaped over it without pausing to speculate about it, or to measure it with his eye. The truth was that the chained hunter who had lived in Rutheford's back brain had a better command over his body than had Rutheford himself. There seemed to be a more direct connection. His impulses did not have to go through a clearing-house of intelligence, but acted on his muscles immediately. He pushed on through the woods, easily but with caution. He searched every thicket for small game that would furnish food; he peered ahead for the sight of lurking enemies. And suddenly a new terror smote him.

This was a different kind of terror than that which had summoned him from sleep. It was not merely the sharp voice of instinct, but a deep, awesome fear of an utterly strange sight. Lying on the hillside was a huge, birdlike thing; its wings were long as a fallen tree. He saw instantly that it had come from the sky. The little saplings had been broken off by its impact. And in the second glance he saw that a manlike creature lay among its tangled and broken bones.

A manlike creature, surely; but not a man! Indeed, he was almost as strange to see as the great bird itself. He had the general form of the men who hunted in the forest, but his face did not look right. It was too white, too naked. His body was covered with queer-looking pelts, and where the pelts were torn, the skin showed white instead of black with hair. The being was sleeping now.

To this strange, wild-eyed ghost of Ogden Rutheford, there was only one explanation for puzzling events. They were all supernatural. What he could not understand he attributed to the unseen powers. Part of his brute heritage was a long-practised ability to create goblins and spirits by which he could interpret life. So his mind worked now: he decided that the sleeping figure was some sort of a demon or god that had come down from the sky, riding his great bird.

No doubt the bird was a god, too, he thought, of a lesser order, but greater than any god he had ever imagined. As a hunter, he could take his chance with moose and caribou, bear and wolf; but he wanted no close dealings with gods. He cried out hoarsely, then whirled and fled.

HE DID not stay to grasp a tree limb. Rationally, he decided that no tree-top refuge could save him from a bird-god. Instinct bade him run for his life, and put the high ridges between himself and the danger—danger that was ghastly, uncanny and horrible.

He ran with amazing speed. He leaped the fallen logs; with the utmost of his strength, rallied by terror, he crashed through brush thickets. He ran until his breath rushed sobbing to his lungs, until his muscles blackened with congested blood. When he could run no more, he rallied the last of his strength to climb a tree.

Among the swaying limbs of a tall spruce he found a measure of security. Surely the bird-god would not find him here, he thought, behind the heavy screen of boughs. Likewise he was safe from the common dangers. The game trails, where he was in turn the hunter and the hunted, lay far below, and even the cave lions could not leap so high. His hands locked naturally around the small limbs, and grasping and sobbing, he let his outraged body relax.

It might have occurred to him that he was sadly out of condition. The race he had run should not have left a tried hunter and woodsman so spent and shaken. But perhaps terror dulled his mind; and, besides that, neither he nor his kind were very introspective, anyhow.

He began to conjecture about the bird-god and its rider. What portents had this visitation to his woodland home? Bad luck, of course—all omens were bad omens; all wonders and miracles prophesied disaster. The gods were ever jealous, malicious and hateful; this he knew well. They laid traps for him in every trail. Many and many a time he had avoided these by a hairbreadth.

Only the sun-god was sometimes merciful, and warmed people while they slept. Half the time, however, even this god hid behind the mountains, afraid to go abroad in the dark. The darkness itself was death, devils and destruction. Yes, all these things he knew only too well.

Did the coming of the bird-god prophesy his own death? This was a disturbing possibility that now occurred to his slow mind. Would soon the forest cease to know his step?

But in this case, why had the blow been delayed? He had lain helpless, asleep, within a few paces of the god. And what god or devil or beast would spare a man so long?

He pondered a long time on this matter, and finally thought it out to his satisfac-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tion. He could understand, now, why he had gone to sleep, as sometimes a foolish young caribou slept, in the danger-haunted forest. He could guess why he had no previous memory of the place where he had wakened. Obviously, he had been bewitched! The bird-god had put a spell upon him, as spells are often put upon the poor hunters of the forest. He knew all about spells. He could not remember who had told him, so long ago it was. And now one of them had moved against him! Truly, it was a wonder that he still lived.

Presently he glanced down, over his own body. Except for his instinctive grasp on the limbs, his violent start would have hurled him out of the tree. His appearance had been fearfully and wonderfully changed. His legs were not now black with hair, as he knew they ought to be; they were covered with some strange raiment. Cautiously he felt the covering. Plainly, it was a new kind of an animal skin, even the smell of which was unfamiliar. This also was bewitchment, fearful sorcery, by the bird-gods.

Gasping, he started to tear off the covering; but his hand held. His eyes widened, and he glanced about furtively. Why, such an act might anger the gods. He had heard, many times, that they were as easily angered as a wolverene. These skins had been put upon him while he slept, for some mystic purpose. And where had he seen such garb before? He remembered now: he had seen it on the body of the being who had lain, asleep, in the broken wings of the bird-god.

What else had the forest demons wrought? He was aware of a savage, driving pain in the top of his head. Carefully he felt the place, to find his hair sticky and wet. His hand looked red. Yes, the gods had wounded him. He could think of no other possibility. They had made the red blood flow. But, perhaps, since they had not killed him when they had a chance, they would be lenient and spare him now! Perhaps he would live to see the sun wheel back once more.

Thus moved the thoughts of the man who had been Ogden Rutheford, as he clung in a treetop in the Yukon forests. And now his thoughts reached farther. He began to grope for a clearer sense of self. He wanted to identify himself—to distinguish his own being from the beings around him, on the earth and invisible in the air.

His dreams while lying wounded had placed him well enough, had oriented him as far as the ruined compass of his memory could indicate; but they had not named him. Something within him cried the need for a name. So he let his instincts speak.

Of course he could not remember his former name. So cleanly was it erased from his consciousneess that he did not even miss it. Even if it had been repeated to him, it would have had little meaning in his brute mind. It was merely part of the language he had lost.

Suddenly his mouth opened, and he grunted a single syllable: "Og!" he said.

Of course, He was Og. Og, the brute man, the hunter of the ancient forest.

CHAPTER II

SONG OF THE WILD

AS THE afternoon began to wane, Og started down from his tree. He moved with slow motions, like a sloth, like a man who is driven against his will. He hung a long time on each branch before lowering himself; his eyes darted nervously into the thickets below. He was still bitterly terrified, yet within him was an urge that he could not resist.

He made a strange picture, crawling through the branches; not only his mind was changed; there were other changes, remote, hard to identify, in his physical appearance. There was something childlike, yet at once wild and furtive, in his movements. He was clumsy, yet he seemed to know how to hover, dimly visible, in the thicker branches. His eyes were indrawn, nervously bright. His clothes were torn by his exertions; his face, torn and scratched by the boughs, smarted sharply.

He stood at last on the ground. For a long moment he waited, motionless as a snake, with one hand raised to clutch a limb over his head. The forest was without sound. The May sunshine slanted through the spruce boughs, its endless patterns pleasing to his eye. Reassured, he began to search through the shrubbery.

In his vitals was a driving devil that must be satisfied. No wonder his heart leaped, savage and fierce, when the short grass rustled in an open place. A gopher-like rodent, one of the common ground squirrels of the north, peered at him with bright, beady eyes.

The brightness grew in Og's own eyes. He was clutched by an excitement so intense that he gasped. Never in all his days had Ogden Rutheford known such a pas-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sion. But Og knew! His eyes glared now. He bent down, with stealing motions, seized a two-pound stone. Suddenly he hurled it with all his strength.

As the missile sped from his hand, a sound gushed out from his tight-drawn lips. It was half a growl, half a snarl; and Ogden Rutheford would never have deemed that it abided in his throat. It was the outburst of a savagery that lurks in the deepest wells of man's subconscious—ordinarily forgotten until, perhaps, the stabbing rush of a bayonet charge over no man's land. And this was no man's land today. Rather, it was the land of beasts, of primal forces over which man has not yet extended his reign.

For Og, the sound was a relief valve for the pressure of ferocity in his heart. And it ended in a savage yelp of anger as the stone missed its intended victim.

The squirrel ducked into a hole. Og ran forward, tearing at the burrow in childish anger. His foot drew back to kick at the misdirected stone, but a sudden chilling awe made him refrain. Perhaps the rock had gone wide of its mark on purpose! Perhaps it contained a spirit that hated him, as most of the woodland spirits *did* hate him. If he showed it any insult, it might pursue him. It might put a spell upon other rocks that he threw.

He soon saw another gopher. Indeed, the little mound-builders were everywhere. They were afraid of him, at first; but when he remained motionless, they soon emerged from their burrows and went about their scurrying occupations.

To freeze into a lifeless shadow, this was the secret of hunting. Yet he did not have to learn it by bitter experience; it was a clear whisper in his brute brain. Strange how like a brown stump he could appear! And now the rocks fled straighter from his hand. And the range was close. At last he made a direct hit.

The gopher lay stunned in the spruce needles. Og cried out—a yell of triumph—and, running forward, clutched the warm body in his hands. He knew an exaltation far beyond his childish powers to express. The animal was of a lowly species, and he had killed it at five paces with a stone; yet in his primitive mind it became a splendid trophy.

Was this so strange? No duck hunter would think so. Even so-called civilized man knows an intense, savage thrill when a two-pound pintail falls to his aim. It differs only in degree from the triumph that Og knew now.

He crushed the animal's skull with a stone, and tearing through the fur with his fingers, sank his teeth in the warm flesh. Because the inhibitions of civilization were removed, he knew no horror of the raw meat. If his paralyzed memory had functioned at all, he could have remembered feasts hardly less barbarous: the gorging of a ten-minute duck in a glittering café, or a raw-beef sandwich. A carnivorous animal had dwelt in chains within Ogden Rutheford's body. Now it had leaped forth.

Satisfied, he moved into an open space, from which he could see in all directions. He watched for a moment, then sat down in the sunlight. For a time he was aware of a great contentment. His thoughts moved idly, always from primitive premises.

Presently his mood darkened; he did not know why. He glanced about nervously, listening for a suspicious rustle of brush. He heard none. The trees had that curious immobility which comes in late afternoon. Yet he was increasingly uneasy. He got up and stood leaning forward at his hips, peering.

The shadows were moving and growing. This, in itself, was a mystery that he could not solve—something to be pondered over hours on end—but now the fact seemed to have special significance. He seemed to know that they predicted the coming night, the blackness and the horror of the day's end!

FEAR-STRICKEN, he watched while the sun dropped, down and down, until at last it disappeared behind the hills. Plainly, it, too, was afraid of the coming night. It was hiding. And now he himself must go and hide. The sky changed hue; it was no longer blue, but greenish-gray, like dead grass. The trees were darkening, dimming, their trunks blending into the background. It was an hour of strange metamorphosis, of manifold mysteries, of wicked enchantment.

Og's dismay changed to dread. His dread rose to fear. His fear grew at last to horror—dark, awful, almost paralyzing. He struggled up the biggest of the nearby trees.

Then he waited, ghastly pale, hardly breathing.

The tree had promised security, at first. When the sun shone, it was a satisfactory retreat from earthbound enemies in the woods. But how would it save him from spirits that fluttered in the air, from gob-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

lins who whistled in the dark, from devils who moved and crept in shadow! He waited for the clutch of their talon hands.

Twilight deepened. At last the heavy dark dropped down. Through it he saw the bright points of the stars, mystic lights that twinkled and almost went out. If they did go out, he would surely die. Only blackness would remain.

He heard the whisper of the wind. He thought it was a great beast, a man-hunter, creeping through the treetops. Even when he felt it against his face he personified it: it was one of the malevolent spirits of the wild, seeking his life.

The minutes crept by. Again and again Terror lifted its head—once because of a marten in the branches. Og was afraid to go to sleep, yet exhaustion weighted his eyelids. Finally he slipped down into a crotch of the branches and dozed off.

Ogden Rutheford, in the same position, would have feared falling. Og, the Dawn Man, had no such fear. Both his hands were back and up, over his head, locked about tree limbs; the fingers were fixed as if by paralysis. No slipping away of his consciousness could relax his grip. Nor was the position strained: it seemed the natural way to sleep.

Now one might understand why the sleeping orangutan in the zoo and far from his dusky Sumatran jungles clutches the bars of his cage. One might guess why the tender human infant, sleeping on it back in the cradle, lies with both hands reaching toward the headboard. Later it outgrows this attitude, as conscious intelligence begins to take the place of instinct; but in the first months of its life it still remembers the arboreal habits of the race. Blindly it is reaching for the tree limbs; stanchly its little fists are closed about the invisible boughs.

Og dreamed strangely and vividly. Often he cried out in his sleep. At last the faintly dawning light wakened him.

So he was spared another day. Nothingness had menaced him, but had not consumed him. Now the sun was returning, too. It had fled from the dark, afraid; but it had tunneled under the earth to reappear on the opposite sky-line. Once more Og could climb down and seek food.

He was not greatly rested. The darkness had only endured an hour or so—such is May in southeastern Yukon. Also, he was stiff and lame from muscular strain and the crisp chill of the night. Yet he knew that primal happiness that the dawn brings—it is known to every outdoor man, even though night has lost its terror long ago—and when the sun shone warm, his hope in life returned. Once more he threw stones at the ground squirrels.

He fed and drank. He ventured timidly into the next glade. His physical needs satisfied, he began to conjecture on some of the mysteries of his surroundings. He did not know it, but this propensity to conjecture, setting him apart from most brutes, was even a nobler thing than killing a ground squirrel with a stone.

One of the most baffling mysteries lay just at his feet. It was his shadow. He feared it bitterly at first. It seemed to make no sense. It followed him everywhere; it mocked him; it grew and receded in size. Sometimes it took monstrous shapes. Yet he soon decided that it was a rightful part of him, probably friendly to him. Everything, it seemed, possessed a shadow. Therefore, so he reasoned, everything was double. Life was dual. There were two of everything. There was a real self and a shadow self.

This thought began to work in his unlettered mind. It led to some queer deductions. He noticed, for instance, that even motionless things, like stones, had moving shadows. True, the stone shadows were not active and fluttering like his own, but they moved a little, always keeping opposite from the sun. To Og, movement meant only one thing—life.

He could not conceive of movement without life. Such is the natural limitation of a savage. And since the shadow was alive—a living spirit—plainly its other self, the thing that cast the shadow, must be alive, too. Thus every tree, every dead stump, every mound of earth possessed a living spirit. And since these spirits were probably demons, hating him and wishing to destroy him, he must walk carefully among them. He must always be on guard not to offend them.

The shadow-self was thin and flat and earthbound, yet in some ways it was greater than the thing-self. For instance, it could change shape at will. It could grow large or small. If he himself could do the same, what a convenience it would be! No more would he have to fear the white-fanged hunters of the Wild! Obviously, the shadow-self could do magic. It was worth venerating.

OG'S wound throbbed and his head ached, and for a single moment he glanced back darkly into another clime and time. It seemed to him that in the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

land of a dream there were men who likewise venerated their shadows. At least they believed in a dual self, and an inner life known as the soul. And did this high flown belief arise from a cave-man's speculations about an image that the sun cast on the ground?

His thought drifted on in the present. He soon found that his shadow-self could run as fast as his own fleet legs. By the most determined effort he could neither run away from or catch it. And this was only the beginning of the shadow's powers.

In the early afternoon a black cloud, menacing and fearful, swept up and covered the sun. Instantly Og was appalled. It was like the twilight descending before its hour. Og loved the sun; it was the only friend he had in this stronghold of the elements, and he could not abide its absence.

Danger seemed to creep close. His vision was restricted; the land looked bleak and unfriendly. And suddenly glancing down, he saw that his shadow had vanished.

He made what seemed to him an entirely reasonable deduction. His shadow had fled to escape the danger. Obviously it had the power to come and go at will. When danger threatened, it would leave him, and find some safe place of refuge. Oh, a mighty spirit was this shadow-self of his!

When the last danger finally overtook him, when the ultimate dark lowered about him, and he died with a yell and a gurgle in some horrible thicket, it might be that his shadow-self would escape then, too. It would flit away to a safe refuge, and in the twilight it might return. Yes, it might be that the shadow was immortal.

Thus thought Og, the Dawn Man. But he did not know that he had worked out the basic principle of almost all great religions. He did not dream that he had stumbled onto the blind beginnings of man's belief in the immortality of his soul.

Even on this second day of his repatriation, Og began to make frequent contacts with animals. Of course the rodents were the most common. The rabbit cycle was near its zenith, so these little gray eavesdroppers swarmed in colonies in every copse. On every hillside were squeaking gophers; and, growing fat upon them, were hundreds of small carnivora.

Og was always meeting these people. He was ever hearing the rustle and swish of the brush as they avoided him in the trail. Running tracks in the dust! Whispering leaves overhead! Fur glinting brown in a thicket!

Even an experienced outdoor man might not have seen so much. Yet this was not due to any miraculous quickening of the gaze of Ogden Rutheford. True, his eyes were rapidly adjusting themselves to the light and shadow of the woods; but the larger factor was the constant, razor-edged vigilance of the Dawn Man, Og. Every instant of every waking hour he was on guard. He investigated every suspicious sound. He was abroad every hour of sunlight, and did not, like most frontiersmen, spend a great portion of his time in a cabin or a camp. He was not preoccupied by thoughts of gain, or by the thousands of personal abstractions that go with civilized life.

On a creek bank he met a long-bodied, soft-furred creature about the size of a young cat. He paused, his heart bounding. The animal confronted him with green, glaring eyes. At once it turned and fled, loping with easy bounds.

Og gave chase. His face contorted out of all resemblance to the face of Ogden Rutheford. He was a wild and brutish figure running at top speed, brandishing a flint that had seemed to fit his hand. Of course the mink escaped. It had only contempt for this heavy-footed foe. Yet the tremendous exertion, winding and exhausting him, tended to build up Og's body.

Such trials as these would either kill him or make him a man of steel.

Once he was startled by a resounding slap in the center of a woodland pool. It proved to be an otter, one of the finest of small folk.

Toward evening he encountered a small herd of caribou in an upland park. These were splendid beasts. The bull in the lead was truly a monarch of the parks—his velvet antlers already well-grown, his mane snow-white, his tawny form aquiver with the unquenchable vitality of the wild. He did not flee at once, as the moose had done. This was a thing to puzzle an outdoor man. Usually the merest wisp of human scent will send any horned game half mad with terror. In spite of the fact that the bull was down wind from Og, he seemed to have difficulty in identifying him.

Was Og a man? The stag seemed to doubt it. He pawed, swinging his handsome head. Og hovered, ready to climb a tree. Meanwhile he was caught between two intense emotions. One was terror: the realization of inferior strength, which could be offset only by superior cunning.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The other was an abysmal desire for meat.

The animal was good. His flesh was red, his fat was white, his bones were rich with marrow. If Og could kill him, there would be full feeding for many days.

But now the caribou had identified him. He snorted and raced away. Why had he delayed so long! Was Og losing the man-smell that all animals so frantically fear? Was the scent of smoke and fire—which in a wild animal's nostrils must be the horror of the unknown—passing from his garments, and the reek of raw meat taking its place? The answer to this question might profoundly affect Og's life.

AS THE shadows grew long, Og made a lucky find. A queer-looking, slow-legged animal descended a tree in the trail ahead. It wore quills—the pain of which Og seemed to remember from long ago—and it did not attempt to flee.

The animal almost doubled in size. He swelled until he looked as large as a young wolf. No wonder a cold chill of superstition blew over Og's soul!

Yet he soon remembered the truth. For once, he did not have to call on the demons of the air for an explanation. The porcupine had simply erected its close-lying quills. Og could hear the crinkling swish of the spines.

No doubt this trick was a valuable one. The survival of the porcupines, in forests full of enemies, was no doubt partially due to this simple stratagem. Many little white-fanged hunters were probably frightened away by this show of force. This protection was in addition to the barbed spines themselves; deadly points which had brought many a wolf or wolverene to a slow unhappy death.

Yet the trick of bluffing was not confined to porcupines. It is one of nature's most common devices. The presence of danger will raise the hair on a dog's neck; the grizzly bear himself, brought to bay in some rocky pass, will seem to increase in size and power by the same reflex, touched off by blind emotion.

And now for a moment Og's headache made his mind wander. He seemed to remember, as in a dream, white men of civilization who still, in moments of danger, complained of a creeping and stirring of hair, and a cold chill down the back. Plainly they were brothers to the porcupine and the angry grizzly. With them, of course, the trick of hair-lifting was no longer effective. Their skins were too bare; and, besides, they had no wild-beast enemies to frighten away by a show of force. It was only an outworn reflex remaining to remind those haughty men of their lowly origin.

The vision past, Og killed the porcupine with a stone. By attacking it from beneath, he was able to gorge himself on its rich, strong meat. He carried the remainder of the carcass with him.

At the base of a distant cliff, he saw a round black spot. He guessed what it was—the mouth of a cavern; but at first he dared not approach it. It might be the lair of some of the evil spirits that moved everywhere about him. At least it was the den of a wild beast. Yet he kept peering at it, and he could not turn away. Some home-seeking impulse in the nether regions of his brain held him entranced.

Gives hair that "just-combed" look all day long!

'Vaseline' Cream Hair Tonic is the only hair tonic containing **VIRATOL.** This special compound helps make your hair look natural, feel natural . . . stay in place hours longer.

Just rub a little on your hair each morning . . . then comb it and forget it! 'Vaseline' Cream Hair Tonic is good for your scalp, too. Contains Triple-A **LANOLIN** . . . checks loose dandruff.

Vaseline
TRADE MARK ®
CREAM
HAIR TONIC
the cream of them all!
VASELINE is the registered trade mark of the Chesebrough Mfg. Co., Cons'd

Tops in entertainment: DR. CHRISTIAN, starring JEAN HERSHOLT, every Wednesday night, CBS coast-to-coast network

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

At last he worked his way slowly toward it. His hands were open, ready at any instant to grasp a tree limb. When he had approached within forty feet, he waited and listened. At last he picked up a rock and timidly threw it into the cave.

It would have been a strange sight, grimly ludicrous, to see him waiting for the response. His eyes were peering, his mouth hung open, his hand had reached up to a comforting bough. But no enemy rushed forth. No demon, imagined so vividly in his semihuman mind, came sweeping out on batlike wings. There was no cave bear's raving rush. After throwing a rock or two more, Og pushed on clear to the black maw. The cave proved to be small. Og could see its farther walls. And suddenly his wild heart bounded with unutterable joy.

Why, this was home! It was shelter from the horrors of the night! Nearby was a large stone that he could roll in front of the maw, forming a barricade that even Running-Feet could not pass! He had cheated the gods that plotted his death.

But how did this brute-man know a home when he saw it? By what bold leap of his intelligence had he seen the advantages of a lair like this? The answer goes to instinct. The jungle mind that had survived Ogden Rutheford's airplane accident was not purely that of an arboreal ape. True, it knew the thrill of aerial leaps, of swinging from limb to limb above the danger-haunted trails below; but also it recalled five hundred centuries of cave dwellers. Og was haunted by dim, thrilling pictures. He saw the first timid venturings down from the trees, at the beginning of man's reign. His heart glowed, and his fierce eyes flamed, and his lips drew back in a snarl, as he visioned the wars that followed.

The caves had been inhabited by wild beasts. There were savage bears, and demon wolverenes, and far-leaping lions, and terrible, yellow-eyed Running-Feet, the wolves. Blood upon the stone! Yelpings in the dark! Death upon the threshold! The thwacking of clubs, and the cracking of skulls, and the tearing of flesh, Og had heard them all.

But the tree men had conquered. Glory to the flints in men's hands, and the cunning in man's heads! Soon they lay secure, with stones blocking the cavern mouths. Og could see them: their fierce eyes glaring under heavy brows, their mighty, hairy bodies crouched and warlike.

Now the same security was his. He rolled the stone near by, then, crawling inside, worked it forward with his hands until it practically blocked the entrance. At once he turned and looked about for some way to celebrate his fortune.

He could not dance. Dancing is not a solitary act. It must come later; it must be developed by the tribe. Neither could he sing But there was one triumphant rite which he was not denied. His eyes roved toward the carcass of the porcupine.

He was not especially hungry. He had eaten only three hours before. Even his great toilings, and the change of tissue that was occurring in him every day, had not yet reawakened his appetite. Yet his very feeling of security stirred his hunger again.

He was hardly aware that his head had begun to ache a little, and that a vision was flitting before his eyes. And this was no dream of the long past, of the cave and the hairy men. Rather it was a television of a clean-cut, immaculate man at a civic banquet, celebrating a political victory.

What had this to do with him? Could it be that these lofty people, and this cave man, gnawing his reeking shank of porcupine, were acting upon the same impulse? Yes, they were obeying an instinct inconceivably old, passed down from the lower vertebrates. They were expressing a new-won sense of security in the most natural way—eat while the chance offers, before ye are thrust forth into danger again!

Og gorged, and presently he slept.

WHEN Og emerged in the late morning, he stood a long time at the cavern mouth. He was not particularly afraid. The ground was bare within fifty feet of his refuge, and if an enemy appeared, he could doubtless roll up his barricade in time. He was merely enjoying the wonderland spread out before him.

The view was magnificent. There were open meadows, shimmering green, in which clear streams traced a silver network. There were isolated groves of spruce, black as the blackest pit of Og's nightmares. There were long, fair glades, and mysterious thickets, and deep-set little lakes full of melted sky. Farther off were the ranges, green, at first, with timber; gray beyond, with slide rock, and glittering white, at last, with snow. Og's heart thrilled.

Had he found a love of beauty? Far from it. Beauty, of itself, was utterly beyond his ken. In this, he was like all low savages.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Things were pleasing to him, or displeasing, for definite and material reasons. He know nothing of line, of color harmony.

The open meadows were the feeding grounds of the caribou. This is why he loved them. If he were a great enough hunter, and the gods sufficiently blessed him, he himself might kill one of the antlered monsters. The very thought was ecstasy.

Oh, the red fountain of wounds! The bowing head, with its crown of horns! The white fat, and the red meat, and the big bones rich with marrow! The full feeding, and the security against the devils of famine for days and weeks to come!

Hanging like burs in the spruce were porcupines. Lurking in the thickets were smaller game, and perhaps a bear, that some time, if the gods favored him, he might slay. In the streams and lakes were darting shadows that, by godlike cunning, he might snare into his hands.

The peaks beyond were not merely desolate wastes of slide rock and weary snow. Og knew, with some clear inner knowledge, that they were peopled by big game. There were splendid, cloven-hoofed beasts with curling horns, and invisible wings whereby they might fairly fly up and down the cliffs.

To Og, this glorious mountain realm was only a hunting ground. His love for it was a belly love. And why should his head ache again, ushering in visions that he could not understand? Was the long past casting another shadow?

When the tourist stands on the car platform and thrills at the wild, rough grandeur of the Rockies, is he so far removed from Og? Perhaps he, too, sees, in his secret soul, the happy hunting ground of his desire! He beholds his ancestral home; he skulks again through the thickets, the hunter and the hunted. In him, the more direct impulse is lost; meat hunger and blood lust have become transfigured to the high-flown sentiment of nature love. And how many other of Ogden Rutheford's past exalted emotions had arisen from just as lowly and as savage an origin!

Presently Og went venturing forth. Although there was still plenty of meat in his cave, he crept forward to brave the dangers of the forest. He did not know that this was a notable act. It indicated the beginning of a love of adventure which, come to fruit, has peopled the farthest islands of the sea.

Og loved hunting for its own sake. He loved to kill even when he was not hungry: a fact that showed a great growth over the mild-natured, lazy animals of the forest. Man is the bloodiest and cruelest killer on earth; and Og was a man. In evolution he was only a little below those rich, full-fed city dwellers whom Ogden Rutheford had seen swarming into the duck blinds at dawn. If he were only a little farther along he would even love that greatest sport of civilization—war.

True, Og was beastlike in many ways. He was a brute, and a very terrible brute; the reek of raw meat was upon his hands and his jaws; and like the bear and the wolf he would, of course, be overwhelmed and cowed by such wholesale killings as occur in civilized countries. Yet he was not a beast, but a man. He had passed the border line. In his normal dreams—not those queer visions that haunted him when he had the headache—he could look back upon uncounted centuries of cave dwellers. And his man's estate was never more clearly shown than in his growing love of killing, and in his venturing forth to hunt when he was full fed.

No grizzly bear would do this. What outdoor man has ever heard of Brush-Devil leaving a fat and ripened carcass? Rather he would stay by it, gorging daily, until the meat was stripped from the bone. Plainly, the grizzly is the lower animal. He is lazy; he does not care to take life except for meat. His brain is not fine enough; he is not yet far enough along on the road of evolution, to act any way but directly from primal motives. He has yet to know blood lust.

But Og did little killing today. He passed by the gophers with lordly contempt. The time would come when he might chase them again, driven by his fierce hunger; but now he was full-fed, hunting for sport rather than for meat, and he desired bigger game. And again he showed himself a man, rather than a beast. Beasts know pride of a sort, but one kind of game is as acceptable to them as any other kind.

AGAIN he met the wild folk in the trails. Everywhere he ventured he heard rustling leaves and pattering feet. Mostly these were little people, rodents and small carnivora, but finally he encountered one of the woodland barons.

On a rocky hillside, scantily grown to trees, a gray, shadowy figure silently appeared. It loomed up suddenly, out of a strip of low grass which Og's eyes had searched in vain only a second before. No wonder the man thought this was a supernatural being, a demon, perhaps, such

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

as haunted his dreams. Only demons and shadows and other fearful spirits of the dark could materialize out of the air at will!

The brute's appearance seemed to bear out this idea. It was lean and gray; its red mouth was barbed by glittering fangs. Its eyes were yellow, glowing, terrible. Yet for all this, it was no stranger to Og. A violent leap of his heart told him that this was an old familiar thing—this meeting on the hill. Long and long had he waged war with the gray devil of the woods. They had fought for the supremacy of the wilderness. Flint against fang, man cunning against beast cunning; the struggle had gone down the ages. The darkness of Og's nightmares, which had nothing to do with his crazy headache dreams that flashed and passed, were haunted by such gleaming, sinister, yellow eyes.

This was Running-Feet. This was Killer-in-the-Dark. This was Red-Mouth, the demon. English-speaking people called him a wolf, imitating the sound of his short, growling bark; but in many languages his name was synonymous with "devil." This particular specimen was a gaunt female, hunting meat for her cubs.

Og's hair stood on end. Ancient terror, almost forgotten by man in fifty centuries of civilization, gripped him like a hairy hand. Yet he held his ground. Clear-voiced instinct warned him: "Hold! Hold! Hold!" To turn and flee would only invite a charge. The brute would be on his shoulders, hurling him down and slashing at his throat before he could reach a tree. On the other hand, a bold front might scare the beast and hold her at bay.

Yes, she seemed afraid, now. She snarled and crouched, menacingly, but her lean body was still held in leash. The truth was that the white-hot spark of the desire to kill had not yet flamed in her brute brain.

Was this so strange? An outdoor man would not have thought so. His only surprise would be that the beast had not fled in terror at the first glimpse of man's form. And it is true that no lone wolf will show fight to its mighty and all-powerful enemy. But Og did not know this. He was not aware that knives and guns had crushed Running-Feet's fighting spirit centuries ago. Instead, his jungle brain was burdened with memories of how wolves had attacked men ages agone, and killed them, too, and left their naked bones to the scouring of hateful winds. He had no knife or gun; he was only Og, the Dawn Man, standing here with a flint in his hand, and in his heart an infinite longing for the security of a treetop.

Presently the wolf threw up her head. She seemed to catch a message that had eluded her until now. It was faint—almost hidden by other messages that had at first deceived her—and it was terror beyond imagination. This foe before her was man! She knew him now. He was Fire-Maker, Killer-at-a-Distance, God-of-the-Cold-Iron.

How she identified him is almost beyond human understanding. He was brutish, smelling of the forest; yet perhaps his body still carried a taint of smoke—the token of fire which is the symbol of the Great God Man, and which no wild beast can bear. Perhaps—and stranger things are believed in the North Woods—she smelled cold steel, the blade of a knife which Ogden Rutheford had carried in his pocket and which Og, the Dawn Man, had not yet discovered.

Suddenly she disappeared. She vanished like a puff of gray smoke. Og stared; then he caught brief glimpse of her long body as she raced away through the timber. He himself turned and fled up the nearest tree. He had no sense of triumph. He was only thankful to his shadow-self—or to whatever spirit it was that had protected him—that he had escaped. And certainly it was a close call. The man-smell that had saved him seemed to be passing from his body. He might lose this safeguard soon, and then he would have to depend on his own prowess—the fleetness of his legs and the strength of his arms.

When at last he descended the tree, he traveled straight toward his cave. He hurried into the rocky crypt and rolled the door stone up behind him. Only then did his leaping heart subside to its usual measured beat. Only then did he remember hunger, the first and last passion of his being.

He consumed the remainder of the porcupine flesh; and then, peering through a crack in his barricade, he watched the twilight descend. For a while he felt deeply at peace. He was secure from the prowling beasts of the night, from Yellow-Eyes, who haunted the dusk. He had come through a great peril and so had reason to believe that some god or spirit was friendly to him. So he gnawed porcupine bones and planned great killings for the future.

He did not laugh. Laughter was a thing he had yet to learn. He knew joy, but not mirth. When there were no bones left to

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

gnaw he expressed his pent-up happiness by beating with an old, dry thigh bone—the last remains of a bear who had wintered and died here, in some deep snow of a bygone decade—on the rock wall of the cave. He kept time to his heart: *boom-lay—boom-lay—boom-lay—boom!* at regular spaced intervals.

The sound excited him. It was like the very loud, strong heartbeat that man experiences in moments of keenest living. Perhaps there was a reverse action of some kind here. The body and the mind are strangely attuned; they are mutually stimulating. For instance, a bull's anger is accompanied by an increased flow of blood in the little vessels of the eyes, making him literally "see red." Because he "sees red" when a red flag is held before his gaze, he become automatically angry. He is not intelligent enough to tell the difference between a simple reflex and an emotion aroused by the presence of actual enemies. Og's brute-mind worked somewhat the same. In the moments of intense, pleasurable excitement his heart always beat loud. Therefore, a loud, artificial heartbeat, tuned with his own, tended to excite him.

In any event, the regular rhythm recalled the most intense moments of man's history. It was like the strong beat of his pulses in his eardrums. Perhaps it also had some poetical association with the rhythms of nature: the day and the night, the winter and the summer, the cycles of the moon.

OF COURSE Og was not aware of these things. He only knew that he liked the noise. *Boom-lay—boom-lay—boom-lay—boom!* His head did not ache tonight, his crazed visions were passing; so he did not know that in a thousand distant cities men were likewise enjoying themselves. They were thrilling to the rhythm of music, the *boom—lay—boom* of jazz—never knowing that their joy in it might be rooted in the wild beat of a cave man's heart, in the wars and the victories and the bloody triumphs of long ago.

Boom lay—boom-lay—boom-lay—boom!

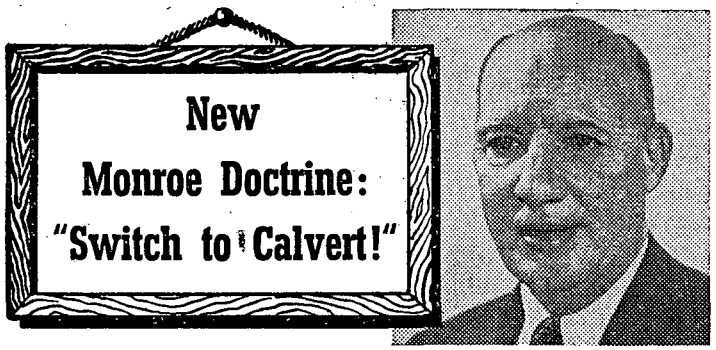
Presently his hand held. His breath held, too. He lay motionless as a heathen idol in its crypt of stone. Stealing from the dark was a thin thread of sound. It was not a joy sound. Rather it was a wail of sorrow. It rose high and higher, and broke at last in an eerie sob. At once another voice joined in; and then a third; and finally still other voices that were lost in a strange harmony. The chorus gathered in volume until it filled the cavern and all the space under the moon.

There were long-drawn howls, shrill barks, and, at intervals, another dismal sob. The chant rose and fell, almost died away; only to ring forth again, finally rising to a crescendo. At last it broke suddenly in a wild laugh—a laugh of mania, of black despair—a laugh that chilled the blood in Og's veins.

The sound shuddered through the night and slowly died away. The utter silence closed down.

Og's exalted mood had passed off at the first note of the chorus. Now the heavy darkness lowered upon him. And this was no mere physical fear. He was not afraid that these singers-in-the-dark would storm his stronghold. He had forgotten, in this hour, the terror that had pursued him every hour of his woodland wanderings.

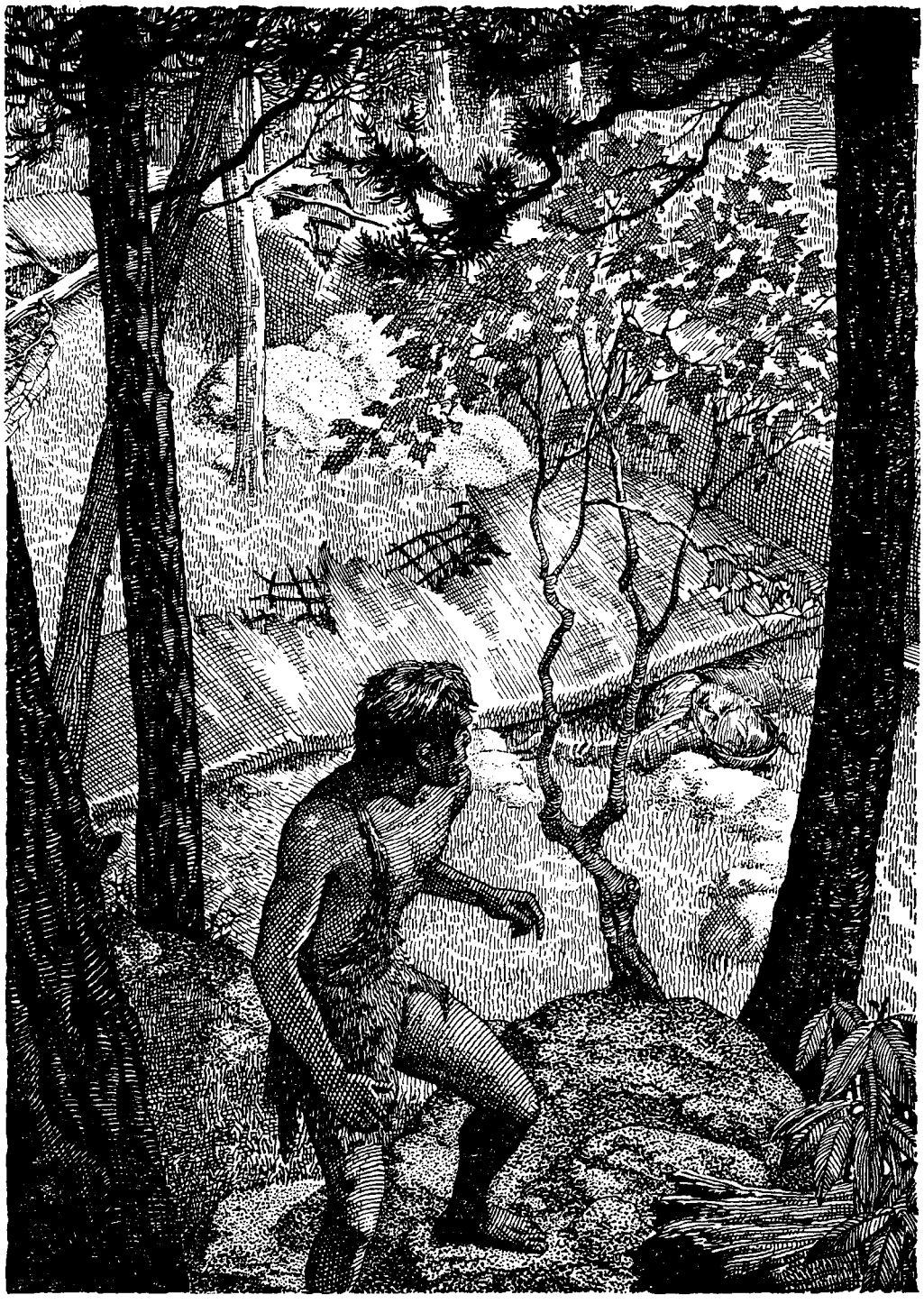
This was a higher emotion. It was despair, the antithesis of hope. Yet it differed from the black dread that assailed him when the wind raved, or when the other forest demons spoke aloud in the dark. This chant in the dusk was not the voice of spirits, but of some of his wild neighbors. He knew it well; it had rung down the ages and had frequently echoed in his



NEW YORK, N. Y.—George H. Monroe, New York singer and entertainer, advises men of moderation: "Switch to Calvert Reserve—as I have. Calvert really is lighter, milder, finer. It always makes your occasional highball taste *better*."

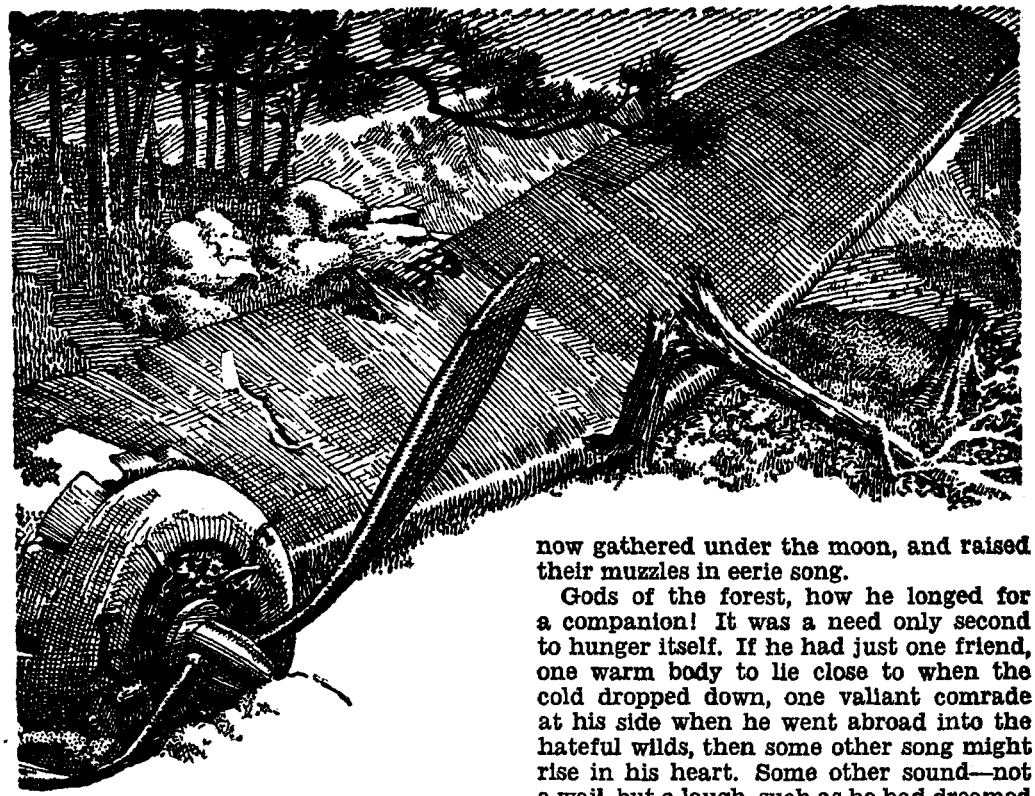
CALVERT RESERVE BLENDED WHISKEY—86.8 PROOF—65% GRAIN NEUTRAL SPIRITS. CALVERT DISTILLERS CORP., N.Y.C.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



The sleeping figure was, no doubt, a god that had come down from the sky riding this great bird. . . .

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



dreams. It was the night song of the wolves.

They were chanting one of the basic songs of life. It bespoke the travail of existence, the pain and sorrow that is the portion of every living thing; the struggle to survive; the fight against overwhelming odds; the long war that begins at birth; the cruel might of the elements—maiming, killing, crushing, striving ever to sweep away all life, so that once more they may reign supreme, and the wind may howl over an unpeopled waste!

Famine. Cold. Storm. Lightning. Mystery. Of all of these the song told; of the weary wastes of snow that would follow this glad spring; of avalanche, and flooding waters, and trees snapped off in the gale: of hopeless death at last in some dark thicket.

This was life! Og knew it now. The song expressed what his own heart knew, deep below its surface exaltation; that for which he had found no utterance.

He was helpless and alone. The gods of the earth and of the waters and of the air, all were his foes. Every stone hated him; every wind clamored with malice in his ears. And his only companions in this misery were enemies, too—such beasts as now gathered under the moon, and raised their muzzles in eerie song.

Gods of the forest, how he longed for a companion! It was a need only second to hunger itself. If he had just one friend, one warm body to lie close to when the cold dropped down, one valiant comrade at his side when he went abroad into the hateful wilds, then some other song might rise in his heart. Some other sound—not a wail, but a laugh, such as he had dreamed—might flow from his lips.

The wolves had expressed what he himself had felt. Plainly they had more in common with him than the lesser beasts.

It seemed to him that they were his own kin. True, they would eat him if they had a chance, and he would like to eat them; yet they were his fellow victims of the elements. They were not demons, as they seemed, but creatures of flesh and blood, like himself. Perhaps he should try to make friends with them, so that they could face their mutual enemies together.

He would rise up, when sufficient boldness grew upon him, and find a wolf's lair and kill the mother. Then he would take its toothless cub, and bring it to his cave. Perhaps it would live, grow and, eating from the same carcass, remain his companion. It would be man's first friend.

And was this a vain dream, too? Would the men who came after him, when the world was old—those to whom, in his destined hour, he would give life—would *they* ever achieve it? It seemed too much to hope for.

Tonight there was only the cold, bare cave, and the solitude, and the haunted night beyond. He was alone, and the darkness appalled him. So when the wolves

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

raised their voices again, he cried out, too. His voice rose in a wail that broke at last in a deep sob.

Og was singing the first song.

CHAPTER III

KNIFE MAGIC

TWO days passed in comparative quiet. Og roamed abroad, ate squirrels, peered and listened and crept, and dreamed darkly in his cavern at night. Then, in a hushed midday, danger overtook him again.

He was following a deeply worn trail. It led him up through dense thickets, then over a rocky hill. At a bend in the trail he came face to face with a traveler from up-country, one of the most fearsome creatures that Og's beast-haunted mind could imagine. No doubt this was the woodland monarch.

He was a huge creature, sturdy, muscular, and weighing as much as a cow moose. And his very gait was terrifying. He moved with a curious swaying roll, his huge front paws swinging out and down, his vast shoulders rocking. Fierce little eyes gleamed out of his burly head. White fangs—the bone-breaking, meat-tearing tools of a carnivorous animal—flashed in his red mouth. Compared to him, the biggest wolf in the pack would have looked like a cub. It was a full-grown male grizzly, newly out of his cavern in the high mountains, and ravenously hungry.

Og identified him at once. Of course, the brute-man had no name for him; yet he knew him intimately. Desperately and terribly intimate had been their acquaintance, since the dawn of Og's race.

This was almost his first enemy. When the glacial cold had driven the tree people from their bowers, and they had sought refuge in caves, they had found this beast already in possession. Savage and red were the wars that followed. Og's dreams were haunted by the roars, the growls, the frightful death-dealing charges, the maiming and the sudden death of these long-ago forays, at the base of the ancient cliffs.

Did he not know those jaws? Did anyone have to tell him of the avalanche power of the cave bear's attack? Had he forgotten the thunderbolt blow of his mighty arm? No wonder Og's hair stood on end, and he yearned for the nearest tree.

For one breathless second, the two brutes confronted each other. Then the grizzly seemed to double in size. His hair stood erect; his great throat swelled as he growled. Then, with a deep, lion-like roar, he charged.

Og ducked to one side. Mere flight could not save him; the bear was swift as a running horse. But even the brute-man's marvelous agility, leaping full-fledged into his body, seemed useless now. The beast was almost upon him, and he felt the wind of his foe's sweeping paw.

The first blow missed; the horned maul whizzed past Og's head. Otherwise it might have decapitated him like an ax blade. Screaming, Og dived into a thicket. And then, for interminable long seconds, there was a ducking, running, dodging game among the trees, breath-taking to see and shocking to hear.

Og was shrieking at the top of his voice. He was uttering shapeless sounds, like the cries of a beast in mortal pain. He was no more conscious of them than of the physiological purpose they served. How was he to know that, long before the human voice learned to shape itself in words, it was a relief valve for overtaxed lungs? The discharge of air through his vocal cords permitted increased respiration, which, in turn, sustained him through his final climax of human effort. Meanwhile, the bear was roaring like a storm.

Presently Og caught a gleam of hope. Fifteen feet distant was a strong tree, with a bough extending some eight feet from the ground. Og did not know that he could reach it. He had no reason to believe that he could run this distance without being struck down. But a voice that was half instinct, half intelligence, told him it was the only chance he had.

He darted forward. He felt the earth shake at his feet as the bear bounded after him. He leaped with all his power, hands grasping. As his fingers gripped, he swung himself forward.

The grizzly passed under him. Og heard the mighty jaws ring shut. And an instant later he was scurrying up through the branches, spared for one adventure more.

The grizzly could not follow him here. A black bear can climb, but it is nature's wise provision that this grizzled monarch of the forest must hunt on the ground. Presently he journeyed on, searching for less agile game.

Since he came off scot-free, Og was glad of the experience. His terror passed away, leaving the pleasurable aftermath

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of intense excitement. For one moment he had lived to the full.

Og could well feel triumphant. He had dodged like a mink; he had leaped like a wolf; he had swung into the branches like an ape. Fast on his feet was Og, the Dawn Man! Strong were his arms, quick his eye! In his joy of escape, he gave no thought to the menace of the future. He did not see, in the bear's behavior, a new, greater era of danger than he had yet faced.

Why had the animal charged him at all? This was far from typical grizzly behavior. As a rule, the big bears will flee in terror from man's smell. Even when wounded, they rarely attack the hunter. And this fact applied not only to old trapping countries, but to the uttermost wilds, even to such vast back regions as this in which Og found himself: the region of the Pelley Range, where man almost never came. Yet in defiance to this fact—in the face of the wind that blew Og's smell directly toward him—the savage brute had attacked like the game killer it was.

There could be but one explanation. The man smell had passed from Og's body. At least, the smell of civilized man had so passed, and all that remained was the basic essence of the human animal, no more to be feared than any other animal odor. Young caribou might avoid him yet, because he carried the reek of a meat-eating beast such as habitually preyed upon them, but they would not go mad with horror, as when civilized man crosses the wind track. They would regard him as they might regard a wolf or a bear, a dangerous and cruel foe, but not as a god. The smell of smoke, of cooked meat, was no longer on his clothes and skin.

HEREAFTER Og must walk with even greater care. He was fair prey, now, for any beast that could master him. And as the days glided one into another this fact became more and more plain. No more was he the invincible hunter; he was also the hunted—fleeing for his life from the woodland lords.

He was menaced not only by the big carnivora, the wolves and the bears, but by the horned game. No more did the bull moose break frantically from his trail. Indeed, the vast creature stood his ground and bawled a challenge. With his razor-edged front hoofs, he could make short work of a fragile animal like Og. The bull caribou menaced him, too, and even the little lynx snarled at him when they met in the trail. The cow caribou hissed and coughed when he came too near her calf, meanwhile backing away.

Og no longer moved awkwardly up and down the tree trunks.

Practice was making him agile as an ape.

Meanwhile, other changes came upon him. His eyes were more keen. They had become adjusted to the uncertain light of the woods; they could detect a shadow among the shadows that showed a beast in ambush. Indeed, he found that his vision was the best in the forest. He could distinguish an animal by its outline, while the beasts could only interpret motion. If Og stood still, his foes usually passed him by, unseen. To them an immovable object was only a stump or a stone. But their silent waitings by the trail rarely deceived him.

His hearing was sharpening, too. He not only could hear, but he could interpret hushed sounds which until now had meant nothing to him. He could distinguish a wind rustle from the whispering step of a hunter.

He was acquiring a magnificent strength. Ogden Rutheford had had a sound body to start with, kept fit in a gymnasium, and Og was building it up by prolonged and

fast HELP for HEADACHE
UPSET STOMACH
JUMPY NERVES
BROMO-SELTZER
FIGHTS HEADACHE THREE WAYS
For fast help from ordinary headache always take Bromo-Seltzer. It fights headache three ways:
1. Relieves Pain of Headache.
2. Relieves Discomfort of Upset Stomach.
3. Quiets Jumpy Nerves.
Caution: Use only as directed. Get Bromo-Seltzer at your drug store fountain or counter today. A product of Emerson Drug Company since 1887.
BROMO SELTZER
HEADACHES
NEURALGIA

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

exhaustive exercise. His diet of raw meat did not hurt him; indeed, he thrived upon it. Due to his warm airman's suit, he had not suffered from the cold of the May nights.

These garments were now wearing off. Also, the soles of his shoes were almost worn through. Still, nature did not let him suffer on these accounts. His body developed resistance to cold, and the waxing summer made garments unnecessary. As his shoes wore out, his feet toughened; by the time he kicked them off for good, the horny skin of his feet was like sole leather.

As his muscles were building, his child mind was growing. Every day the wilderness taught him new lore. Mostly he gathered concrete facts that helped him in his struggle for existence, but occasionally he picked up moral ideas.

One such idea developed from a commonplace incident of cave life. Og had killed a porcupine and dragged it to his lair. Two meals—evening and morning—had not stripped its bones, and when he went forth to hunt again, some rich shanks yet remained. So he had hunted half-heartedly, passing by a digger squirrel that squeaked in the grass fairly at his feet. What did he want of this hawk's meat when his lair still reeked with the strong flesh of bigger game?

But he had a rude wakening. When he returned to the cabin, he found that a lynx or a fisher had been ahead of him. The little hunter had crept in through a crack in the barricaded maw and had robbed his store.

Not a scrap remained for hungry Og. No wonder he snarled in rage, and prayed for Heaven's wrath upon the thieves!

The meat was his own. He had won it fairly. Yet creeping feet had robbed him. Thieving fangs had stripped the bones clean.

In the long, hungry hours that followed, he decided that such thieving was the worst of sins. The thief that had made so free with his property surely deserved death. However, Og was not yet able to draw a moral. The faculty of putting oneself in another's shoes—of obeying the Golden Rule—is found only in an advanced stage of civilization. Yet no less a teacher than painful experience at last taught Og a code of ethics. He discovered that, just as he had judged the meat thief, there were gods of right and wrong who would judge him.

In his wanderings, he encountered an old grizzly, feeding on the carcass of a moose. Whether the bear had ambushed the stag, or whether he was simply playing the buzzard's part on a dead body, Og did not know. He only knew that one of his fellow brutes was richly feeding while he himself stood by with gnawing stomach. Presently the bear discovered him, snarled, chased him into a tree, and went back to his gorging.

When his paunch was full, the bear covered the carcass with a great pile of dirt, leaves, and spruce needles. This was not, as it might seem, to prevent decomposition. None of the larger beasts of prey object to well-ripened meat; and, indeed, the moose had already lain a week under the May sun. Rather it was the bear's way of showing ownership. He meant to come back to that feast, when hunger assailed him again. This point Og understood.

The bear waddled away. Og descended the tree. He waited until the brush rattled far off; then he stole up to the carcass. Keeping a close guard, he dug out one flank of the animal, made a hasty and hearty meal, and stole away triumphant.

He had outwitted Brush-Devil. Cunning and crafty was Og, the Dawn Man! And then, in the height of his triumph, retribution smote him.

It was not an attack by the bear. This would have been no retribution, but merely the give and take of the wilderness. It would have had no effect on Og's moral ideals. If he survived at all, he would simply learn to take no more liberties with grizzlies. Instead, the blow fell from the skies. On the night following the meal, Og wakened with a howl. Twenty devils were clawing at his insides.

When at last the sickness passed—when, so weak that he could not walk, he lay helpless and groaning on the floor of his cave, he came to an important decision. Surely, he thought, the gods had deliberately afflicted him. They had punished him for stealing another's meat!

Not soon would he go thieving again! And if Ogden Rutheford could have stood by and seen, he might have smiled his thin-lipped, knowing smile. He might have understood, now, a possible beginning for one of the oldest laws in existence and the basic premise of modern capitalistic civilization. The law was? "Thou shalt not steal."

OG HAD become expert at throwing stones. At the same time he was learning the value of tools in general. One day

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

he picked up a sharp flint. It attracted him because it was almost the shape of a bear's canine tooth. It might be that it was toothlike in other ways—that it would tear flesh and crack bones. The deadly and destructive spirit that lived in the bear's fangs might have passed into it, cheated by its resemblance in form, and would lend it added power.

He carried the stone with him. He found it not only useful for cracking bones, but also for quickly cutting through the tough hide of a porcupine. And this fang idea led him to an even greater discovery.

One day his aimless hands discovered a pocket in his ragged airman's coat. In it was a small object that looked like bone. He could not remember how he had come by it; it must be a gift from the bird god, that puzzling day he had been bewitched. It troubled him so deeply that his head ached. He kept trying to recall a dream of long ago—a most strange vision that made no sense but yet, somehow, seemed of vast importance to him. But he could not grasp it.

Anyhow, the piece of bone was an interesting plaything. He liked the feel of it in his hand. Presently an inquiring finger nail pried at a little groove at one side. Something like a sharp fang emerged from a hidden mouth.

It was only a knife blade. Og had discovered, at last, Ogden Rutheford's heavy clasp knife.

But to Og it was surely magic of a most terrifying kind.

He dropped the knife and backed away, eyes staring, but soon his hand crept forward again. Some wisp of memory from some far-off land told him it was not really to be feared, but was a token worth keeping. He picked up the knife, and took childish pleasure in opening and shutting it.

Still he was held by its resemblance to an animal fang. Indeed, it was sharper even than a wolf fang, which could slash a man's leg from thigh to knee. Playing with it in his cavern, he found that it cut meat ever so much better than his sharp flint. So, thereafter, when he wandered abroad, he often carried it open in his hand.

He still did not use it as a weapon; his mind was unable to conceive of projecting it, like a stone, and since his killings were all at considerable distance, he could not slash with it. To put it on a stick and use it as a spear was a mental leap which he seemed unable to make. However, he used it to dispatch small animals that he had stunned, and to quarter them for food. It occurred to him, also, that if he were able to kill a large animal—a moose calf, say, or a young caribou—he need not wait till it had ripened before he consumed it. This new fang was sharp enough to cut even fresh meat.

He still killed his game with stones. Indeed, he could conceive of no other weapon. Bows and spears were not for him; they belonged to a far higher stage of culture. Mankind has used such ingenious arms only since yesterday—for fifty thousand years at the most—and they cast no shadows on Og's brute memory. Knowledge of them was not yet written in man's jungle brain; so Og could not imagine them.

To the contrary, a stone was the most primitive weapon known to Og's race. It seemed to fit his hand; it thrilled him as it went hurtling through the air. And now one might understand why incorrigible boys are almost invariably stone throwers. Yet Og was no reactionary. He progressed; he developed the art of stone throwing to a fine point. He learned that some stones flew straighter than others. Some were too light to kill game; others too heavy to carry far. And the time came soon that he conceived of a far broader use of his weapon, a use that might make him master of the wilderness.

The idea was not purely original. Indeed, it was too novel, too greatly an innovation, for man's brute brain to conceive of it unaided. As always, Og copied from nature, the source of all ideas. Yet in adopting nature's ways, and putting them into practise, and adjusting them to the conditions of his life, he displayed intelligence of a high order.

One day, as he was emerging from his cave, a loud rattle overhead made him look up. And he was none too soon; a fifty-pound boulder was bounding down the cliff directly toward him. He dodged to one side; the rock struck with a crash.

Of course, his first sensation was fear. Always, it seemed, fear reached him first. And this is why, perhaps, infants awake screaming in their cradles—infants too young to have known anything but love and tenderness and security. Terror is the very title-page of life. But on this occasion Og's simple fear changed quickly to a more complex emotion. This was dread, a deep-seated horror that dilated his pupils and brought crawling sensations to his back and scalp.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

He knew, now, whence this stone had come! It had been hurled down at him from some hateful god who lived on the slope above. Some cunning and patient demon had taken this diabolical way to end him!

A most crafty devil must this be. If Og had not been on guard, he would now lie shapeless, his body crushed by the far-falling missile. And it would have killed a bull moose just as easily. It would have slain a grizzly bear.

Yes, even Brush-Devil, the forest monarch, would lie here, silent, under the earth-cracking impact. His bones would be broken, and no blows from puny flints would be needed to extract the marrow. His blood would deluge the cave mouth.

Og's face suddenly changed expression. The last of his horror passed away; under his matted beard his lips drew in a snarl. It would have been hard to recognize this creature as bearing the remotest relation to Ogden Rutheford. His eyes grew luminous with that strange, lurid gleam that marks the killer, the beast of prey. He hurried away into the fastnesses.

PRESENTLY he found a well-worn game trail. This he began to follow, cautiously as ever, and with a curious deliberation. He not only scanned the thickets at each side, usually the ambush of his enemies, but also the tree branches overhead. Because he was going about this enterprise as a reasoning creature, he did not waste time in vain experiments. With an admirable patience, he delayed the practise of his plan until he found conditions right.

Presently he paused, grunting. Just beside the trail grew a big cottonwood. Its wide limbs branched off close to the ground and overspread the path. Eagerly, Og went in search of stones. And what kind of stones were these? He passed by the two-pound chunks that had been his joy before, and selected a round boulder that weighed fully seventy-five pounds. This he carried back and placed in the first crotch of the tree.

He climbed up and began to work the big stone higher into the tree. It was prodigious work; but this was a prodigious game. Finally he lay directly above the trail, the boulder resting in a crotch in the branch.

A long wait began. Og's fierce eyes lost their fire. Still he lay almost without motion, bearing the strain of his awkward position with brute-like patience. Two tedious hours dragged away.

Suddenly a faint sound blew down the trail. Ogden Rutheford would not have heard it at all, but Og, the Dawn Man, caught its every tone. It was a faint thump; and it sent the bright blood spurting through Og's veins.

It was not the wind. It was not the spirits of the air. It was not a rock, settling against its fellow. Instead it was the soft-falling foot of a beast. One of the forest people was advancing into Og's ambush. The sound came nearer. Sometimes it died utterly away, and the silence would close in for long, heart-rending moments, and Og would almost faint with suspense; but always it commenced again. Finally a bull caribou pushed his way round a bend in the trail.

This was a splendid animal. His sides were tawny, his mane snow white, his summer horn growth was already large. Of the big woodland variety of caribou, he was veritably one of the wilderness barons; and he took the middle of the trail. No lone wolf would dare attack him. A lynx would only snarl at him in impotent desire. Of all the animals native to the woods, the grizzly was the only one that he need fear. Inasmuch as Brush-Devil was now off the range—fishing for salmon in the lower waters—and as he was an awkward and noisy hunter at best, the big bull felt secure. He walked the trail with majesty and grace. True, he scanned the thickets carefully, by instinct, but he pushed boldly into the face of the wind and did not look up at all.

When he strode under the cottonwood, his ears suddenly pricked forward. He had heard no sound, yet plainly he sensed an enemy presence. There was a faint taint on the hard, packed earth of the trail.

Quickly he dropped his head to investigate it. But it was only the track of one of the meat eaters. There was no horrifying smell of fire and iron.

Pausing, he stood directly under Og's ambush. This was a piece of luck that the hunter had not even hoped for, and which plainly showed the favor of the gods. Either a good spirit was working in his behalf, or else a demon was bent on the destruction of the caribou. Og moved stealthily as a snake, aimed his rock with care, and let it fall.

Surely the gods were with him. They did not deflect a stone. Usually they made his victories as hard as possible, first tantalizing him with many failures; but today his first effort was crowned by magnificent

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

success. The boulder smote the animal in the middle of the back. Og could hear not only the heavy impact, but the crash of shattered vertebrae. The bull was smashed to the earth.

To Og there came the keenest rapture he had ever known. It pervaded him like a flame; it ran like fire in his veins. This was his great moment. He struggled for utterance. His chest expanded. Strange sounds, to express all the glory that was his, seemed about to be born in his throat. Yet these sounds would not quite shape themselves. When his mouth opened, only a yell came out, only a beast-like scream rang forth and echoed among the trees.

Even this was better than choked silence. It relieved the unbearable tension of his heart. Far off, the wild things heard it—faint and clear on the wind—and for a moment they were darkly appalled. A cow varibou raised her head from her feeding, and her calf ran to her side. A wolf stirred in his sleep in his shadowy cavern. Perhaps they kenned the meaning of this wild cry. Perhaps they guessed its menace. It told them that a new king had arisen among them. He had just slain one of the woodland lords. Although not nearly as large nor as strong as a grizzly bear, not as fleet as a wolf, yet he possessed that which is mightier than either strength or fleetness. This was cunning. By cunning—by the schemes of his cruel brain—he and his descendants might kill them all. The forest might be stripped of all life but his own.

And this same wild cry rings down the ages. It harks back to man's remote progenitors, to whom it was the climax of sensation, and it lingers still, ever ready for utterance, in human vocal cords. Indeed, it is often heard in cities. It must have been familiar even to Ogden Rutheford, for otherwise his paralyzed memory would not have stirred in Og's brain.

A vision of a lost world passed before Og's unknowing eyes. It came with a burst of pain in the top of his head, and quickly vanished. In this lost world, the kill cry which he had just uttered rings daily in the street. True, it has become modified a little, in the ages, to a loud, harsh laugh. Yet no one could fail to identify it. It does not arise from humor, but from the cruel instincts of the hunter. It is still the triumphant cry of the killer who sees, in the mirrors of the past, his trophy go down in death before the impact of his stone. Og climbed down from the tree. His knife flashed, and savagely he slashed at the prey's throat to dispatch what life remained. No more would this great stag walk so proudly down the trails! No more must Og step fearfully out of his way. This beast was vast—three times the weight of his killer—and his flint-edged hoofs were death, and his horns could toss a wolf. Yet Og had laid him low.

Great was Og!

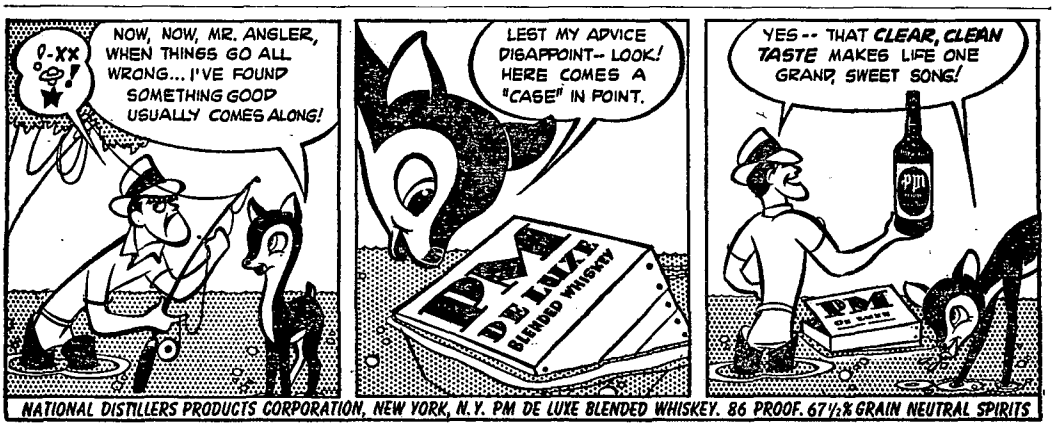
THE stag had challenged him when they met on the trail, but now he kept silence. He had bellowed in his triumph, but now he lay without sound. He had run boldly through the uplands, but now he did not move at all!

Greatest in all the forest was Og, the man!

No more would the stag flaunt his snowy mane. It was no longer white, but red as the red dawn. The eyes that had flashed fire were peaceful and filming.

Great was Og, the killer!

Great was his cunning! By himself he had thought of a crafty plan. He had looked afar for a place of ambush. He had found a stone! And this was no pebble, but a mighty boulder that could break


NOW, NOW, MR. ANGLER, WHEN THINGS GO ALL WRONG... I'VE FOUND SOMETHING GOOD USUALLY COMES ALONG!
LEST MY ADVICE DISAPPOINT-- LOOK! HERE COMES A "CASE" IN POINT.
PM DE LUXE BLENDED WHISKEY
YES -- THAT CLEAR, CLEAN TASTE MAKES LIFE ONE GRAND, SWEET SONG!
NATIONAL DISTILLERS PRODUCTS CORPORATION, NEW YORK, N.Y. PM DE LUXE BLENDED WHISKEY. 86 PROOF. 67½% GRAIN NEUTRAL SPIRITS

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a bull's back like a falling tree. Indeed it was the weapon of a god, not a man. He had lifted it up the tree; by his own strength had he lifted it; and with deadly aim had he let it fall.

As he exulted, his knife blade ran down the white belly. He cut out the heart, intending to eat it while it was still warm. Thus, perhaps, he would gain some of the caribou's notable endurance. Yet before his bared teeth sank home a startling thought flashed to his mind.

It was true that the gods had been good to him. They had granted him great fortune. But they might be turning envious now. They might be angered by his exaltation and his pride, just as the stag's pride had often angered Og himself. It would not do to offend the spirits of the air! Og was a great man, surely; but the gods are greater still. He must strive to keep them on his side, so they would favor him again.

So he took the stag's heart in his red hand and stole off through the forest. Nor did he turn toward his lair, to enjoy a solitary feast. Instead, he trudged over the ridges on an almost-forgotten trail. He soon reached familiar country. This was where a bear had treed him, and where a wolf had fled from his presence. This was where he had killed his first porcupine; and here, on the rock, was a stain of blood from a gopher's body. And at last he was in the taboo land, the country of the bird god.

Fear oppressed him now; he walked with awed steps. Fondly he wanted to turn back—to gain the beloved shelter of the cavern; but an inner urge drove him on. He must make amends for his pride. He must propitiate the demons whom, in his moment of glory, he might have offended. He must go and make his peace and bow his head, do his service to the vast and awful powers that ruled his life. This was a need that he could not put by.

He halted at last in the thickets. Just beyond lay the bird god, prone on the ground as he had left it two long moons before. His eyes were round and staring as he peered through the branches.

He hoped with all his heart that the god would not deign to notice him. To have it rise up and beat its wings over his head, or even to show that it favored him, would be horror past bearing. Still it gave no sign. Forcing his courage to the utmost, Og crept through the thicket clear to the side of the god. He was shaking all over. There was only one consolation: the man god who had lain asleep in the thing's arms had now vanished. Og tiptoed forword and laid the caribou heart immediately in front of the god's head.

How could he know that this was only a man-made machine—a wrecked airplane forsaken by its pilot and by a passenger who had suffered a head injury? To Og it was a being utterly beyond his wild-brute imaginings.

Og had already found religion. In his speculations regarding his shadow he had hit upon the basic principle of most creeds. Now, as he laid the still-warm heart on a stone in front of the airplane, he was reenacting the beginnings of religious form. The stone was his sacrificial altar.

CHAPTER IV

LORD OF THE WILDERNESS

IN THE weeks that followed, Og's knife became his fetish. It seemed to represent something bigger than himself: far-off powers that he knew vaguely in dreams. Also, it set him apart from the other animals in the forest; none of these had fangs so sharp and bright! Their jaw-set weapons were strong and terrible, but they could not quarter meat like his, and they could not glitter so brightly in the sun.

The day came that the knife evinced even greater power. The occasion was one of the most deperate of Og's life. Hunting in a new valley to the east, he was charged suddenly by a she-wolf. The animal came leaping out of her ambush like a demon, a snarling streak of death. And Og seized the branch of a tree just in time.

He was just swinging up, a mocking cry already at his lips, when a most disastrous thing happened. The limb broke with a crack. Og's gibe changed to a yell of horror as he shot to the ground.

It was only a short fall, about seven feet in all; yet to Og it held a lifetime's despair. Nor was it a new experience; often, in his most terrible nightmares, he had felt the rush of air, and seen the leaping earth, and screamed at the danger that lay below, just as now. He landed on his back and was stunned.

The wolf, which had leaped past him, whirled to strike again. She aimed for his throat—and she need strike but once. Those slashing, ripping fangs could open Og's jugular from his collar bone to his jaw. Nor would there be another dodging game, as when the grizzly had slavered at

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

his heels. Hardly the little mink itself can outdodge a wolf, so swift is her leap and so agile her long, lean form. And, besides, Og was too shaken by his fall even to climb to his feet. The only motion he had time for, or strength to make, was a quick turn of his head, thus to behold a vision that would haunt his shadow self forever in the next world.

The she-wolf flying toward him. Her gray hair was erect, her front paws outstretched, her long form like a living javelin. Her eyes were fiery; her lips were wrinkled back, revealing her white fangs. As she leaped, she snarled, a sound as violent as her own attack, ripping the silence as her own body ripped the air. And then an utterly incredible thing happened. The wolf checked her spring in mid-air. She deliberately missed the prone prey and, falling, flinched to one side.

Plainly she had had a warning. Something she had glimpsed out of the corner of her eye—perhaps something she had smelled or perceived by means of some other stranger, less-known sense—had frightened her and put her on guard.

And now she seemed to have forgotten Og. She stood braced, her front feet far apart, her head lowered and pointing toward some object that lay on the ground. At first Og did not know what this object was. His terror blinded many of his perceptions and almost paralyzed his mind. Nor did he notice the scars of an old injury that the beast carried. Her foot had undergone a peculiar disfigurement—the toes had been gnawed or broken off, leaving blunt stumps.

An experienced woodsman would have understood at once. In her proud youth the beast had been caught in a trap, and had freed herself only by loss of her toes. And now, studying her strange behavior, he would have known the kind of snare into which she had fallen on that occasion. It had not been one of the crude Indian affairs, but the modern steel trap.

The thing that now gleamed in the spruce needles and frightened her so was Og's knife; its blade was also of steel. Any uninitiated wolf would have feared the blade— the dread of cold metal goes deep in the animal soul—but not likely would it have spared its fallen prey. Probably it would have tended to its killing first, and investigated the glittering article afterward. This wolf, however, had more than a mere instinctive fear of steel. In her own lifetime she had learned its power to harm. Once before she had sensed the presence of man-made voodoo, in a far-off forest beyond the Pelly River; but her desire for a morsel of meat that lay thereby had overcome her fears, and she had made an almost fatal mistake. She had no intention of making the same mistake again.

She turned, made one leap, and faded grayly into the thickets.

Og treasured his knife even more highly after this. So that he need not drop it when he swung into the tree limbs he contrived to hang it, with a strip of leather, under his arm. He tried in every way to propitiate the spirit that lived in it.

Once, when he was running at top speed, the knife caught in the brush, and, flying back, cut his arm to the bone. Og did not mind the wound, it was only a passing pain at the worst, but he was deeply distressed at the behavior of the knife. Of course, he thought that the knife god was angry at him.

What had he done that was wrong? He tried in vain to remember. What had he been doing at the moment of the cutting? He had been chasing a crippled owl. And now he saw the light. Obviously, he decided, the owls were under the particular favor of the powers, and he must leave

HATE TO SHAVE YOUR UPPER LIP?

Try a Star Blade on those tough stubble patches —those spots where whiskers are wiry and skin tender. Feel the smoother, better shave you get. Sturdier Star Blades are precision-made to take and hold a sharper edge. Try better shaving at a real saving.

STAR

SINGLE OR DOUBLE EDGE BLADES 10¢ and 25¢ Pkgs.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

them alone in the future. And thus one might behold the beginning of taboo. If this superstition were passed down from father to son it might in time become part of the racial consciousness. Many such taboos might account for the thousands of stupid conventions, inhibitions, and illogical ideas at which Ogden Rutheford used to cavil in the days when he walked with men.

To protect himself against further attacks, he made a crude covering for the knife blade. It was a bold thing to do—thus to hide the glitter of the steel—but since the knife itself dispatched the caribou that had furnished the sheath leather, Og argued that it was in no way a defilement. The skin rotted in time, letting the knife fall out, and, in the excitement of hunting, Og did not miss it for a half hour. When his hand groped at last for the hilt, to find it gone, he was utterly heartbroken.

He went running back and forth, frantically seeking his lost treasure. He made mewing, moaning noises which civilized people today hear only from grief-stricken children. But surely his jungle gods were with him. They sent a Canada jay, the camp robber of the North, to scold at the shining thing and thus show Og where it lay in the spruce needles. Thereafter the jay was Og's friend; no more would he throw stones at it and seek its life.

Slowly he learned to use the knife as a hunting arm. He caught and killed a fawn with it once, and once he slashed an ermine that ran under his feet. But another moon waxed and waned before he began to grasp its real possibilities.

On this occasion he had seen a porcupine crawling along a fallen log. He had given it chase, yelling, his knife brandished in his hand. The quarry vanished on the opposite side of the log, and Og sprang over in pursuit. In his fury and blood lust and hunger he forgot to look before he leaped.

Thereby he violated one of the oldest of the wilderness laws. To peer, to listen, to be on guard; these are the primary rules for any creature or breed of creatures that hopes to survive. Og charged blindly, like a mad bull; and the law took its fleet-winged course.

Og lighted awkwardly in the brush, tripped and fell to his knees. And out from under the log leaped the arch-demon of the North, the devil incarnate that Og had seen in his darkest dreams.

This was not a large animal. Although an old male, he weighed scarcely fifty pounds—apparently the maximum weight of his species. Yet he was one of the lords of the forest. In a fair fight at close quarters with a man of ordinary strength, he would not only scratch and bite and lacerate his victim; he would actually kill him and dissect him, almost in less time than it takes to tell it. Probably he was the strongest animal for his size in the whole world. In ferocity he could give points even to that red-eyed little cutthroat, the mink. Once his awful battle fury was upon him, he seemed absolutely fearless and no unarmed man would dare to crawl into his cave. He was the epitome of all that is most terrible in the wilderness: cruelty, savagery and blood lust.

White men knew him as the wolverene. But Og, to whom he was nameless, now knew him as terror itself wrapped in a furry hide. He was taloned hate; he was fanged death.

No use to attempt flight! No use to snatch for a tree limb. This foe could follow anywhere Og might lead. Anyway, the battle began before he could get to his feet. The issue could not be avoided or delayed. Either he must kill this beast, here in the low brush and the spruce needles, or be killed by him.

The animal struck with prodigious power. Fangs slashed, claws sunk deep. And now Og did a strange thing. He did not merely claw at the beast with his hands, nor did he yearn for a stone. He struck back with the weapon he had bared for a harmless porcupine—the charm knife.

There began a mighty fray. The wolverene attacked Og's abdomen, apparently trying to disembowel him. There was no holding those short, iron-muscled legs; the claws ripped Og's worn garments like paper, slashed through his skin, and would have pulled forth and broken his bones had the fight been at closer quarters. His jaws were operated by terrifically strong muscles, whereby he might crush the thigh bone of a moose. His fangs snapped wickedly, again and again.

Yet the odds were not all on the wolverene's side. This was no easy prey that had crossed his trail of death. This was no fawn, to die with a whispered bleat from a torn throat; nor porcupine, to exact his vengeance only in after days. The beast soon found that he, also, was fighting for his life. This man-thing smote like a bear.

The wolverene's smaller size seemed an advantage rather than otherwise. It per-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

mitted freer movement in the cramped space. His heavy fur was like armor. So far Og had hardly been able to slash through to his foe's tough hide.

Yet he was striving mightily. He was hacking, stabbing, slashing, and meanwhile clawing with his left hand to keep the beast out of his vitals. The remnant of his clothes were in rags; he was bleeding from a dozen deep wounds. Yet his courage was gaining with every moment that the fight lasted, and he was tasting power as never before. His heart beat strongly. His lungs sucked in deep drafts of air and let them out with a howl. He was utterly unaware of pain.

THE fight rose to a terrific climax. The forest rang with his shouts and with his enemy's frantic snarls, and far away a wolf left her lair and came creeping nigh to see what advantage might be taken. There might be wounded, to fall easy victims to her fangs. Or there might be carrion from which she could drive the rightful owner.

Og's knife no longer flashed blue-white, but was red as the smoky dawn. Suddenly a great light burst upon him. A glory wholly beyond his childish power to express lifted him up. He knew the outcome of this fight, now. He would not be left, a ragged, dismembered thing, in the blood-soaked spruce needles. He would not go down to death, and leave only his lonely shadow to revisit this gruesome place. He was winning! The charm knife was seeking his foe's heart! The wolverene was slowly, steadily wilting under the deep-plunged blade.

He was already doomed. His attacks were ever less formidable. Og, on the other hand, gained in might. The truth was that he was just now finding himself. For weeks and months he had been developing strength, the shattering fury of which he was just now realizing. His fingers, by which he had clung for life to the tree limbs, were steely hooks of machinelike power. Iron-hard muscles ran and rippled under the skin of his free-swinging arms. His body was assurge with vitality.

In this fight he was proving an opinion long held by anthropologists; that primitive man was not only a cunning animal, but also the wielder of frightful physical might. They have argued that only a superb fighter could have possibly survived long enough to put his slowly developing intelligence into practise. He had high courage—in spite of the horrors that haunted his wakening imagination—and his erect position gave him an agility, a freedom to turn quickly and to strike from all angles, possessed by no other beasts. Finally, he had the supreme advantage of deadly, gripping hands. No doubt he shared a little of the prowess of his close relative, the chimpanzee—an animal that can actually tear a leopard in two with his hands.

And Og did not fight empty-handed. He possessed a deadly weapon that made him doubly strong. His knife was like a red flame in the air. He had been handy with it to start with—a habit so deeply fixed in his motor centers that his head injury had not erased it—and his months in the wild had greatly added to his skill.

The sharp blade would have finished the wolverene long since if Og had given it free play. Instead, he fought close to his breast, wielding the weapon as a shield. He had been afraid to strike too far, to put the reach and power of his upper arm into the blow, lest the beast break through and reach his throat; and his quick, slashing stabs had lacked the force to pierce his foe's vitals. But now his courage flamed up. With red eyes narrowing, he waited his chance. Once more the wolverene rushed in.

The knife cut a wide arc. It flamed like a shooting star. And as the beast was leaping for its prey's throat, Og struck home. Sweetly the blade slipped in. It pierced the strong hide, the iron muscles beneath, and vanished to the hilt. Og's arm was almost broken by the shock and jar. But this was a cheap price; the wolverene did not strike again. It lay quivering in the red spruce needles. Its hateful life was at an end. Dazed, shaken, but exalted beyond any power of his to express, Og drew forth his knife. When he tried to shout his triumph his breath failed.

He had just lived the most intense five minutes of his life. He had been awake, conscious of existence, aware of the beat of his heart and the leap of his blood and the white-hot flame of his being, as never before. He had known a degree of sensation and excitement compared to which his interesting daily routine was tame as death. No wonder such experiences become imprinted in the racial memory. No wonder, considering that such battles were a daily occurrence in the "dim red dawn of man," that children's dreams are still haunted by flashing fangs, and streaming wounds, and savage conflicts which their own immediate lives have never known.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

In Ogden Rutheford's previous existence he had been keenly interested in the causes of wars. Often he had said—like many so-called intellectuals of his class—that they are engineered by money powers and by diplomats and officials greedy for glory. Now he might have another idea. He might understand how the love of battle is inborn in his race. When at war's call the workman leaves his tools and the farmer his plow, and their womenfolk stand weeping in the doorways, are they simply fools, led to the slaughter? Ogden Rutheford used to think so, but now he would not have been so sure. It might be that they were simply seeking an ancient rapture, such moments as these that Og had just experienced, and which recalled a thousand generations agone. They were driven not by scheming money barons, but by their own instincts. And this was apart from motives of patriotism, tribe love, which actuated so many soldiers.

Sometimes Ogden Rutheford had gone to prize fights. He had told himself that the muscular play of two half-naked bodies had gratified his sense of the aesthetic. Less sophisticated men had even a better excuse; they "liked athletics," or, perhaps, they were interested in the career of one or other of the fighters. Yet he had been no less deceived than they. The thing that had brought them to the ringside was, in both cases, an inborn love for brutality, violence, and blood. They were white-collared cave men.

Thus it seemed that Og, child of nature though he was, knew the naked soul of Ogden Rutheford better than that young sophisticate knew it himself. Losing his civilized behavior, he had also lost his inhibitions, his sentimentalities, his self-deceits. Og, on the other hand, looked life in the face. He took his cup of glory where he found it, simply and naturally, and, therefore, he could drain it to the dregs.

He stood a long time, holding the red knife in his hand. The she-wolf that had crept nigh, looking for easy prey to take home to her cubs, crouched, peering through the brushwood. She saw strange sights; she perceived significant smells. She took her time, and read the situation just as exhaustively and as carefully as her brute senses would permit. At last she came to an interesting conclusion.

No man will ever know exactly what this conclusion was. It remained behind the veil of silence. But the little folk in the neighborhood—the hovering, hunted things watching bright-eyed from their coverts—judged her by her acts. She peered hungrily, snarled softly, and turned and crept away.

A new king had risen in the wilderness.

OG WAS a child of Nature. His mother was harsh and cruel at times; yet, somehow, some way, she took very good care of him.

Only rarely did she operate in Og's sight. Usually she was an anonymous benefactor. For instance, when Og went to the berry patches and gorged himself with fruit, he did not know that Mother Nature had gone to a great deal of trouble, and used a great deal of ingenuity, to make him do this very thing.

When the lower forms of life were developing, millions of years ago, Mother Nature knew that they needed plenty of carbohydrates to furnish fuel and energy for their bodies. These were abundant, in their purest and most easily digested form, in the fruit sugars of the wild berries. Of course, these creatures did not know that sugar was good for them, so Mother Nature had to find some way to make them like it. So in the brains of certain animals she contrived a very delicate apparatus. Just as a spark will set off powder, the chemical properties of sugar would set this delicate mental apparatus into motion. And when it was in motion it delivered—as a charged wire delivers electricity—a very pleasant sensation to the animals in question.

Of course, she could have made the sensation unpleasant, had she so desired, simply by furnishing a different kind of apparatus in the animals' brains. It all rested with her; there was nothing in sugar itself that was either sour or sweet. If sugar had been bad for Og—like nightshade berries, for instance—she would have constructed his brain so that it would taste very bitter. As it was, he liked it well, gobbled all he could of it, and, as Nature had intended, thrived exceedingly.

Instinct guided Og in a thousand daily actions. It directed him to a dozen different plant foods. It took him to the creek banks after fish, the catching of which taxed not only his instincts but his intelligence. Sometimes he found salmon half stranded in shallow riffles, and these he killed with clubs and stones. Trout he caught in crude pens of rock. He would chase the fish into a small slough and patiently dam off its mouth with stones and brush. Other dams would restrict the space still more, until he could stab the fish with his knife.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Instinct was Og's master—as it is all men's—yet his higher faculties served him in many ways. Only by his intelligence was he able to establish some sort of a crude philosophy of life. And this was a thing that no beast would have even attempted. What did the wolf care who made the moon, as long as it lighted his hunting trails?

Og liked to whisper his own name, and think about it. "Og!" But what was Og, and where had he come from, and where was he bound? Where did everything come from? What was the idea of it all?

He scratched his head in vain. Yet he evolved a few theories, commensurate with his experience and intelligence. The sun, for instance, was no doubt a god of the most powerful order. It was not a dead god, as some of the far-off mountains that had no moving shadows seemed to be, but a living being who cast an image on the water, and moved from one horizon to the other. Moreover, he seemed friendly toward Og. He made Og's skin feel pleasant, and cheered him in ways that he could not analyze.

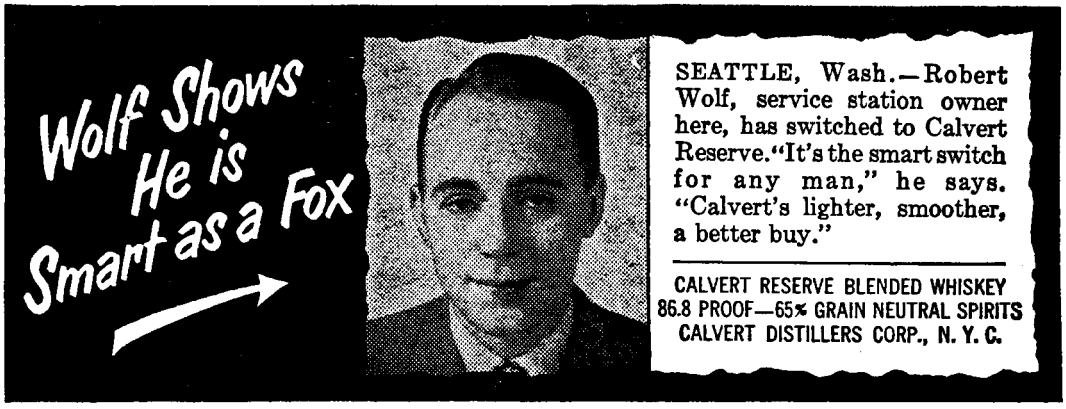
HE DECIDED that the sun must be the author of his being. It seemed to take care of him and love him, as a mother bear loves her cubs. Yet he did not feel particularly grateful. He was yet to regard life as a precious gift; usually it was a bitter burden, a succession of woes, disappointments, and terrors. It was significant that he made no sacrifices to the sun. He seemed to take the yellow god's care and friendship for granted, as something due a child from its parent. Instead, he made his offering to the fear gods—the spirits who hated him and wanted to hurt him—in an effort to propitiate them. When he bowed before his bird god it was in fear as much as gratitude, lest the spirit should feel offended and take away such favors as had been given him.

Such religion as he had was not impelled by love, but by hate and fear. He walked with care, zealous of taboo, not to give thanks to the love gods, but to curry the favor and turn the wrath of demons. And when Og's head ached, and he peered blindly and hazily into civilized times, it seemed that he had heard of such things before.

Civilized men, also, prayed to demons. Like Og, they performed a hundred services of superstition to one service of thankfulness to the Lord. When they did kneel, it was not in gratitude to a loving god, rather it was a cave-man's entreaty for added favors and for protection against disaster.

Og's love god, the sun, was not all-powerful. It hid away, at times, and it fled behind the mountains when the dark came down. Og saw the dawn break and the light spread before the sun came in sight above the horizon. Therefore, he could not guess that the rising sun actually caused the day. In his mind, the day and the night were natural divisions of time over which the sun had no sway. And this conception is common to almost all primitive people. Even in the written history of the Old Testament, the light was divided from the darkness on the first day of creation; although the sun was not created, "to rule the day," until the fourth day of creation. To Og, the sun was simply the day god, who fled in terror just before the night dropped down.

The day was life; the night, death. The moon was a cold god that ruled over death. Just as the sun was friendly to Og, the moon favored the wild beasts of the forest. She lighted their trails and assisted them in their hunting. When she went peering into the black thickets, Og thought she was


Wolf Shows He is Smart as a Fox
SEATTLE, Wash.—Robert Wolf, service station owner here, has switched to Calvert Reserve. "It's the smart switch for any man," he says. "Calvert's lighter, smoother, a better buy."
CALVERT RESERVE BLENDED WHISKEY
86.8 PROOF—65% GRAIN NEUTRAL SPIRITS
CALVERT DISTILLERS CORP., N. Y. C.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a hunter herself. And thus Ogden Rutheford might have traced, rightly or wrongly, the beginnings of the idea of Diana, the huntress.

A man must not sleep with the moonlight upon him. It would reveal him to the eyes of the wild hunters. In time this would come to be taboo, bad luck. That she was their particular god was further evidenced by the songs of woe that the wolves sang to her on the rocky hills. Plainly they were appealing to their god for help.

The stars were eyes. Probably they were the eyes of demons, searching for Og in the darkness. If they found him, they would heap woe upon him.

Back of all the gods and all the demons Og conceived of a greater god—the first of them all. But he was too remote, too vague, to trouble Og much. Og's thought was kept busy with more immediate terrors. Og's universe was a great battlefield. All the powers were at war; some among themselves, some of them leagued against men. Death fought life. The day fought the night. The raw forces of nature fought the visible creatures of the forest. He and the other animals fought each other.

What were they fighting for? For food, perhaps; at least, his own wars were largely to get food for his mouth. Hunger was passion; in gratifying it, he found fear. Fear and hunger were the two greatest forces in his life.

Fear pursued him ever. Even in his cavern he could not wholly shut it out. Outside the rock walls he heard the wind, creeping through the coverts, seeking him. It was a spirit terrible and menacing past thought. Sometimes the lightning flashed; a dreadful radiance to reveal his hiding place and expose him to the attack of unseen enemies who live on the high peaks. Apparently these enemies were throwing great stones at him; he could hear the missiles rearing and rumbling down the slopes. True, he never saw the stones, but their noise always accompanied the lightning; and once he saw where a great tree, near his cavern entrance, had been knocked to splinters by some invisible force.

He tried ceaselessly to placate the powers. If ever a triumphant shout came to his lips, he was immediately afraid that some of the spirits that lived in the tree trunks would hear him and turn his fortune to evil. Centuries before, the druid worshipers had felt the same.

They had appeased the gods of the trees by rapping humbly on the bark. And still when a man boasts of his fortune, he feels safer if he "knocks on wood."

Og's greatest security was, of course, his cave. It was not danger-proof—likely the fiends of the air could follow him even here—yet when he crawled into its dark maw and rolled up his boulder as a barricade, a sweet peace lowered upon him. He dared to cry aloud. He could take time to chew his meat and not bolt it whole. He could sleep soundly, knowing that the baneful forest was shut out. So he developed a profound affection for his little home; an emotion that in far-off cities in these modern times had become complicated with many a strange fetish.

STRANGE were the thoughts that visited him here in his cave. Queer, unfathomable, some of the visions that moved before his eyes. It seemed to him that somewhere, some time, he had known a cavern that was not dark—a retreat that not only shut out the forest, but the night as well—a place where light lingered, conjured up by some mighty magic.

And this weird light was not steady and clear, like the light of day, but flickering and leaping. It was not white, but red as blood. It leaped high and died down, and it was fed with sticks.

This was the most wonderful thing of all. It was a god, perhaps, yet it was of man's making and was under man's control. And no beast could share it. None of them dared sit around it, basking in its glow. Instead, they fled from it and sought refuge in distant coverts, from which they watched with yellow eyes. A man was safe when he sat beside it; the horrors of the night did not dare come in. When man possessed this blessing, he ceased to be a brute of the forest, and became almost a god himself. From hence forth he was the ruler of the wild.

Such were Og's visions. And where did they come from? Not likely were they a groping back to the intelligent life of Ogden Rutheford. He felt no headache, as when the latter's memory stirred in its sleep. Probably a vague fire knowledge was innate in Og, handed down by comparatively recent progenitors. True, man has possessed the flame for only a few hundred thousand years, yet even this brief time might easily have traced faint records on the racial mind. Although Og had no clear-speaking instinct to seek fire—flame not yet being an instinctive need—he could dream of it faintly in moments of abstraction.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

There came sometimes another vision even more significant. As he lay on the floor of his cave he sometimes dreamed that he was not alone. And his companion was not merely a tame wolf. It was no barking "first friend," but some one closer to him than even a friend might be. With this vision came a dream of warmth, of added security, of strange happiness.

The very air was a thrill. The forest he knew so well was enthralled with some new feeling—new but unfathomably old. The animals were behaving strangely. Their daily habits of sleep and feeding were disrupted. They no longer moved leisurely from place to place, but hurried by as if driven by some terrific inner urge. Night would find them on another range from where their shadow fell at dawn.

The moose and caribou bulls seemed oddly belligerent. They ran about simply spoiling for a fight, and when a big-horned male met another of his own kind, they charged in fury. And these were not such little pushing fights as Og had seen all summer. Not now were they contesting the right of way on the narrow forest trails, nor were they striving for first choice of feeding grounds. Many of their battles were to the death. Their soft horns had now grown out and had hardened like fangs, and the deep-plunged points were often red with a rival's blood. They pawed the ground and bawled; their antlers clicked and clashed as they fought for supremacy.

Even their calls had changed. The wind carried the sound of challenges and roarings and entreaties that Og had never heard before. The moose kept up a continual honking grunt, synchronized with his stride; and sometimes he blared like the thunder god across the water.

The wolves, lean hunters and gray, had joined into packs. No longer Og met them alone on the rocky hills, and no more did they remain in little family groups. As Og heard them running along the ridge, singing Heaven knows what of fierce emotions, his own heart seemed to swell.

All these voices found their echo in Og's longing. They seemed to express his own need. Yet what this need was he did not know.

The dream of a companion by his side increased in vividness. Yet when he began to wander farther and farther every day from his cave, it was with no conscious thought of making that dream come true. He seemed to be driven by an urge within himself.

One day he roamed far southward. He did not pause to notice that he was following up a warm south wind. On this wind were scents that he could not identify, yet which called up vague exciting memories from the deepest wells of his mind. The strange hunger gnawed ever more fiercely. It even shut out food hunger, and he scarcely glanced at the game that crossed his trail.

Beguiling scents! They drew him twenty miles from home before the lengthening shadows startled him, and bade him remember fear. At once he turned and started back, running. The dark closed in behind him, far faster than in mid-summer, and the wolves began to sing on his trail.

At last fear drove him into a tree, there to spend the night amid the branches.

WHEN dawn returned, Og did not go back to his cave, but continued on south. The scents became stronger, and somehow they recalled those curious fire dreams he had experienced in his cavern. The shrubbery along the trail, usually so fresh and sweet, had an acrid taint that mystified him utterly.

He began to feel vaguely afraid. This fear was heightened when he began to notice an increasing scarcity of fresh animal tracks. No more did the bull moose bawl at him from some reedy river margin. Plainly the larger, more intelligent beasts had forsaken this immediate vicinity. No more did the herds of caribou file through the highland parks.

Suddenly he came to an imprint of a new kind. He stopped, round-eyed; his hand crept toward his knife. This was no track of hoof or paw; rather it suggested his own old tracks that he sometimes found, made before the strange foot-covering that the bird god had put upon him had sloughed off. Yet on closer examination he knew it had some more mysterious, more fearful origin.

He crouched down, peering in all directions. For five minutes he made no visible motion, and the leaves of the shrubbery above him hung in silence. Then he crept slowly forward.

In his half million years as a hunter, primitive man learned how to stalk. Og's four months in the wilds of the Yukon had called forth that knowlege and had put it into operation in his body. It was no wonder, then, that he moved like gray smoke through the underbrush. No stone rattled

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

under his feet, no branch slid scraping from his side. All but naked, blackened by sun, wind, and earth, furtive of step and movement, his form was hard to see against the dappled background of brushwood. Bearded of face, long of hair, and wild and fierce of eye, he would be hard to identify as the one-time sophisticate and child of civilization, Ogden Rutheford.

This was no longer Ogden Rutheford; it was Og, the Dawn Man. And when he met a tall form in the trail, only a ghost-ridden, brute mind made response.

Terror seized him in its icy grip. As far as he could tell, this was another white skinned, barefaced deity such as he had seen asleep in the arms of the bird god. Yet it was not the same being. Its body had different covering. Also, it carried a long implement of steel and wood.

So intense was Og's fear that it drowned out certain other obscure emotions—perhaps a vague feeling of relationship, such as a wolf might feel for a coyote, or the belled moose for a white-maned caribou. Such points of resemblance to himself as Og might have seen in the stranger were offset by the weird and awful difference between them: the absence of hair on his face, the fearful pallor of his skin, his strange raiment, and the smell of smoke on his body. Og's only operating impulse was to flee.

The stranger had not seen him yet. It happened that he was an experienced outdoor man—hired for certain work in which superior woodcraft was essential—but he did not know the lights and shadows as Og knew them. But as Og turned to steal away, the light glimmered on his knife, and his dim, dark form suddenly projected vividly out of its brushy background.

The stranger cried out sharply. The sound was not a snarl of fury, as Og had expected, but rather an exclamation of intense excitement. Then, as the Dawn Man fled away; the stranger ran after him, calling on Og to stop.

A tree limb was handy for Og, but he did not reach for it. The branches seemed to offer no refuge. Only flight, heartrending and desperate, could save him from this supernatural being who ran and shouted on his trail. And in his terror he could not realize that the shouts were neither angry nor fierce, but were imploring.

They frightened him hardly less than the pursuing hunter himself. The wind hurled them into his ears, and he knew that they were the blackest voodoo that the wind had ever echoed in his cave. It was not the strangeness of the sounds that so appalled him—with thoughts beyond the dim reach of his soul—but their familiarity. They called up visions, clearer than ever before, of what must be the world of gods: a land of miracles, of enchantment, of things that made no sense. They stirred him as he had never known he could be stirred.

The truth was that the sounds were arousing an amnesic from his forgetfulness. It was only a slight rift in the darkness of oblivion—only a passing gleam of a previous existence, mingled and confused with brute conceptions that were Og's; yet it showed that he could be cured. He was simply responding in a minor degree, to certain stimuli which had never come so clear before.

"Ogden Rutheford!" the stranger was shouting. No wonder the name seemed to have supernatural significance in Og's brute mind! "Rutheford, come back! We're your friends, Rutheford; don't run away from us. Rutheford, Rutheford, come back!"

Thus the cries rang out, fainter and more faint as Og raced away. Who could catch this wolf-man on such trails as these? His fellow wolves, perhaps, and the fleet shadows of the clouds, but no ordinary search party of two-legged beings. The guide that Ogden Rutheford's friends had hired returned to camp with an almost incredible story of a half-naked wild man he had seen in the woods, who had vanished like a puff of smoke in the thick brush, and who, as far as the guide knew, was still at large.

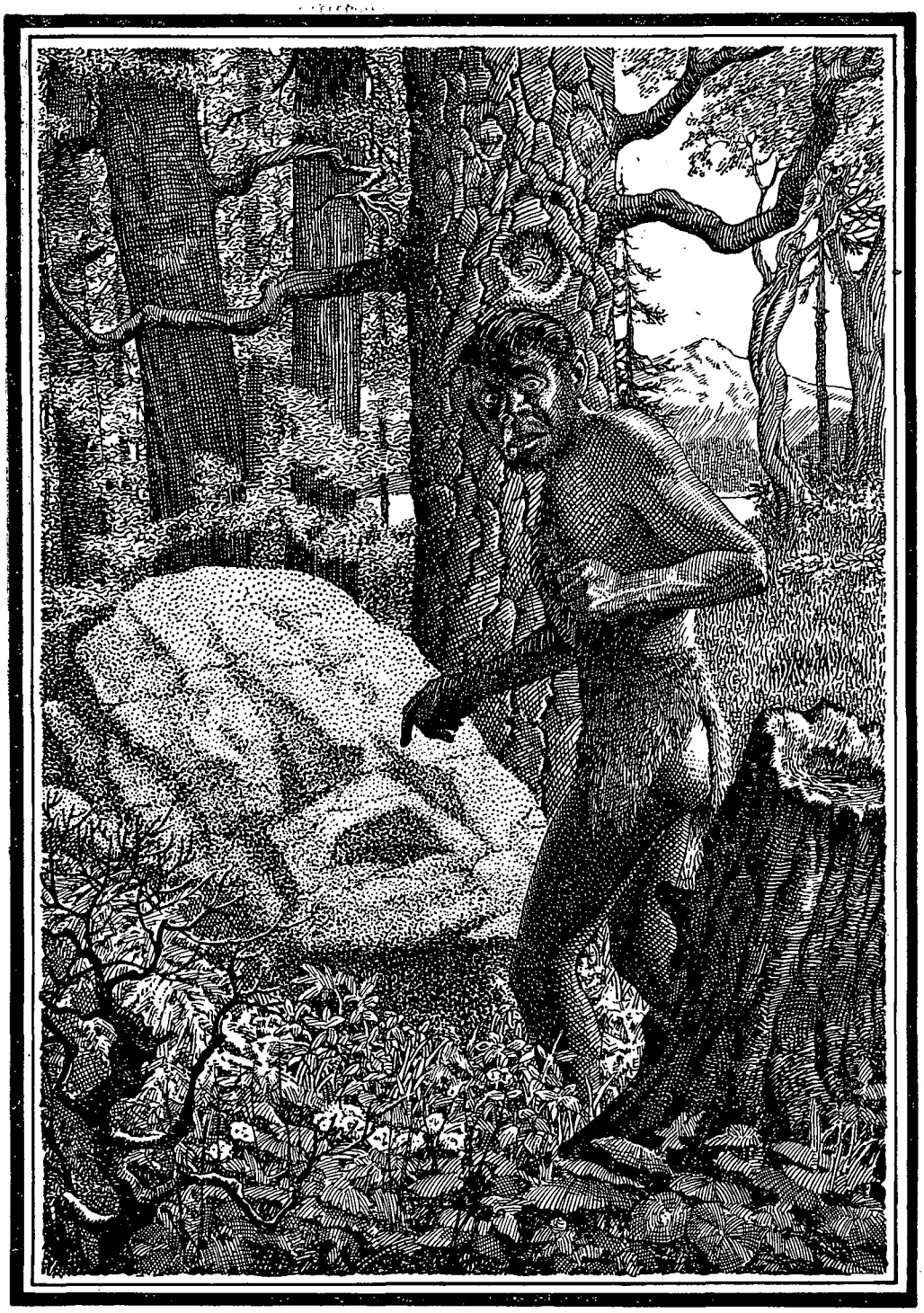
CHAPTER V

SHE-WHO-LAUGHED

OG RAN until the blue ridges lay between him and danger. He ran until the last taint of wood smoke had vanished from the shrubbery, leaving it fresh and sweet. He ran until the trail was beaten down and criss-crossed with the fresh tracks of his familiar animal neighbors, moose and caribou, wolf and bear. He ran until he drew his breath in sobs and so could run no more.

At length he crawled up a tree to rest. Here he hung for a long time, his mind in a turmoil. But at last his strange visions began to pass off. The mountainlike towers, the crowds, the thronging streets, and such other seeming figments of enchantment which the stranger's cries had conjured up,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



Every tree, every dead stump, every mound of earth possessed a living spirit, he knew. . . .

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

faded into mist and disappeared. No longer did he grope into the past. The forest world resumed its familiar aspect. Once more he felt at home.

A creature of mixed identify had climbed the tree. The person of Ogden Rutheford had stirred in his sleep and, for a brief instant, all but wakened in Og's consciousness. But now he had gone to sleep again. The man who climbed down the tree was wholly the Dawn Man, brutish, instinct driven, simply the basic human species with civilization left off.

He did not go back to his cave. The heart-hunger that had driven him from home had been but briefly forgotten, silenced by the voices of his terror, and now it clamored in his breast again. He could not stay here. He could not again endure the lonely darkness of his lair. Where could he find the cure to that loneliness? The guiding breath from the south had only led him into danger. No doubt he would find danger wherever he went; but he could not stay. He stood listening for a moment, then struck off eastward. He would search the hills where the sun god made his lair.

Once more he traveled fast. He even resented the time spent in hunting meat. He bolted the raw flesh and hastened on.

That night he spent in a tree beside an unknown lake. Fully launched forth upon his journey, he wasted no yearnings for the security of his cave. Another night found him almost thirty miles beyond, in a strange, lost land of stunted trees and windy plateaus and barren crags. Even here he did not find what he desired. The nearing peaks thrilled him, and the round hills gave him queer, dreamy thoughts; but his loneliness remained a gnawing devil in his vitals. He could not rest. He could not stay. Even when the trees gave way to shrubs, and the shrubs to gray barrens dotted with old snowbanks, he could not turn back.

There was no safety for him here. If the wolves took his trail, there was no tree to shelter him. If he met a grizzly in the pass, there was no hope but flight. Besides these dangers, there was hardly any meat to sustain his strength. In the whole of a long day he killed only a single rock rabbit, hardly big enough to fill his hand.

He found a pass where the wind shrieked like a demon. Below him lay the gray slide rock, and farther down, the deep-blue sweep of wooded hills. Here were new lakes, new rivers, new hunting country. Here he might find his heart's desire.

Yet it remained a long search. Before it was over, he found many things that he was not looking for. One of these was a new fear—in some ways the darkest, most creepy fear that his ghost-ridden soul had known. A new spirit was abroad in the land. It was a threat that every wind carried to his ears. It was a prophecy written large on every hillside. The forest seemed to crouch, shivering, in dread of some impending attack.

The first sign was the death of the summer flowers. For no apparent reason, they were drooping and dying, and wild bees hummed about them no more, and no more they filled the air with their faint, sweet perfume. Soon not even their shadows remained, dancing on the ground.

Presently the leaves of the deciduous trees began to change color. No more were they shimmering green, but were yellow as marsh grass. This was bad enough; but soon they underwent an even more ominous change.

It began with a cold dawn in late September. Og shivered in his tree, and when he climbed down, his legs were stiff and lame. There was a curious sparkle, darkly ominous, on the grass. When he touched it, it tinkled musically, and it was cold on his fingertips. On the still pools there was a thin, transparent crust.

No wonder Og was appalled. The raw forces with which he strove were revealing themselves in a new and terrible light. They were the masters of his life, these powers, and though they had spared him so far, now they meant to crush him utterly. He sensed their hatred, their menace, their cruel might, as never before.

The leaves changed from yellow to red. It was as if they were bleeding from death wounds that the frost had inflicted. A sign even more ominous was the waning sun. No more did it rise up long before he wakened and sink long before he slept. Indeed, the night was now the same length as the day. And it seemed to Og that the god's rays were ever less ardent. No more did they glow upon his skin. He felt chilly even at midday.

The winds blew colder, brisker. The red leaves began to flutter from their boughs. The little evergreen trees seemed to huddle together, and they whispered and shivered the whole night long. Worst of all the signs was the departure of many of his wild neighbors. The birds, particularly, were forsaking the bare limbs and vanishing in the night. Where they went Og could not guess; he only knew that they

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

were seeking a refuge from some imminent peril. He wished that he could follow them away.

The wolves still chorused on the ridges, but now they sang a different tune. No more was it a mating song; rather it was the dirge of the dying summer. They sang of the pain of life; of hunger to come. They wailed of the cold scourge that would soon be lashing at their flanks; of the whirling, blinding blizzards that were lurking, ready to swoop down, beyond the northern hills; and of the weary wastes of white that would soon sweep forest and plain.

The kindly Yukon summer was all but done. The terrible Yukon winter was poising to attack. In the meantime sped the wild pageant of the autumn, gold haze and blood-red leaves and wailing flocks of wild fowl in the darkening sky. No wonder Og glanced fearfully toward the north. No wonder he hurried his search to the very limit of his endurance!

NEVER did it occur to him to turn back and seek the lonely refuge of his cave. The dominant instinct that drove him on shut out such a thought. He would die, perhaps, but he could not turn back. Always he must hasten on—as a lone gray wolf had hastened some weeks before—to find his goal while there was yet time. Soon the snow would close the passes. The land would be barricaded like a fortress.

Fear could not dim his inner unrest. It ravaged him all the more. It might be that he had only a few weeks to live, the lowering clouds and the waning sun seemed to prophesy darkly. And he must not die; he must answer the call before the day's end, before the deep dusk covered him.

This was more than a personal instinct. It was almost inspiration. Also, it was a strange thing, grimly and startlingly significant. Is man but a toy of Nature? Has she no care for the individual, other than for the reproduction of his kind? It seemed so, in Og's case. He was driven on like thistledown before the wind, and for the same biological purpose. He was proving his kinship to the lower forms of life as never before, kinship not merely with the wolf and the bear, but with the salmon, the lowly moth, the summer flowers. These also lived only that they might procreate. The salmon made haste up his riffles, not to preserve his own life—already doomed when he left the sea—but only that his spawn might fill the river again. Often he battered himself to death in his blind effort to reach the spawning waters where he was born.

The moth, dropping its eggs in the calyx of the flower, was already ripe for death. The flower itself waned, withered, and perished as soon as it cast its seed. Thus it was with Og; Nature had no care for his life, provided it might appear in another generation. When, for his own sake, he should have been storing meat and furs for winter, she drove him on in a remorseless quest.

But perhaps his purpose was an exalted one, after all. Perhaps, in his blind, dark way, he was seeking immortality. It might be that the threat of winter, its darkness prophetic of his own decline, warned him that he must reproduce himself while there was yet time. Otherwise the world might whirl on without him. His shadow self might go to dwell in some far country, and unless he bore fruit there would be no echo of him remaining on the earth's face. No face that was once part of his life would taste meat, smell flowers, behold the glory of the sunset, hear the night songs of the forest.

There was still another factor in this love hunt. Og's quest was not merely brutish; it was bound up with a longing for human companionship. Man has always been a gregarious species. Moreover, he has lived in family groups for so many centuries that he has a clear-cut antipathy against living alone. It might be that Og was building better than he knew. Perhaps he subconsciously realized that he could not face the winter alone; that only by cooperation with others could he hope to survive. Perhaps this reckless quest at the dawn of winter was not self-destruction, but really self-preservation. Instead of cruelty on Nature's part—a remorseless sacrifice of the individual for the sake of the species—it might be loving kindness.

In his dreams Og had found a lifelong companion, someone to hearten him in his fight against the raw powers of the wild. Blindly, brutishly, he was striving to make those dreams come true.

On a late September day Og descended a long ridge on the banks of an uncharted river. As he started to work his way down this stream, searching for a ford where he might cross, he came to a curious mark on a tree. A bit of bark had been removed, leaving a white scar that caught the eye. A short distance down the river was a similar mark.

At first he thought that this was the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

work of porcupines. Often the gnawing teeth of Thornback made marks like these in the cottonwoods. But presently he came to another opinion. The trees were too regularly spaced, too similarly marked. And now the short hairs were creeping on his neck, and his pulse was booming like a war drum in his ears.

These marks had been cut with metal! No animal fang could have made such a clean wound. Somewhere in this valley lived beings like himself, masters of the blade! Fearfully, but with quivering eagerness, he began to follow the blazed trail.

He must find these beings! Even if they turned out to be gods, not men, he must peer at them from the thicket before he resumed his journey. This was a need he could not put by.

The trail led away from the river, around impassable bluffs, and back to the bank again. At every turn of it, Og's excitement increased. Almost at every step he found fresh evidence of some god-like presence occupying the valley. And now only his deep fear kept him from hurrying forward at a run.

This fear did not concern his old animal neighbors. These had been driven from the valley. Such beasts as remained skulked only in the deep woods, and never walked boldly on this trail of the gods. He saw neither their tracks, nor their rubbing places, nor their claw marks on the tree bark. Indeed, the scarcity of animal life increased his fear, rather than lessened it. What beings were these that could intimidate even the wolves? Meanwhile, he himself suffered from a deep-seated, superstitious dread.

THE AIR began to be tainted. A curious acrid smell hung on the shrubbery. Og did not know what it was, and he feared it poignantly. But far away and long ago it had had some momentous meaning for him.

Even now it was vaguely familiar, in some faint inner consciousness. He had loved it once, perhaps; and if some of the Dawn Man's more deeply ingrained instincts could be overcome, he might learn to love it again.

He began to detect other smells, all of which had dim associations for him. One smell seemed to be of fish, combined with smoke. Another was of wild-animal pelts, on which rain had long beaten. The third was an animal smell—somehow like that of a wolf, yet vastly different. And all these scents raised the pitch of his excitement. His eyes were narrow and glittering in their deep sockets.

Suddenly he paused. In the trail were fresh tracks. No animal that he knew had left them here; they were neither round like a wolf's nor triangular like a bear's. In outline they were like his own imprints, but they showed no toe marks. Yet they were different in many respects from the tracks of the god man, seen on his southward jaunt. There was no distinct mark of the heel, and no little holes made by tiny fangs growing in the soles of the god man's foot.

He followed the tracks, and soon they were joined by others. Presently they became so numerous that he could no longer tell the stale from the fresh. Other even more ominous signs became frequent. One of these was the trunk of a tree, cut evenly off some three feet from the ground.

No knife had done this. No thin blade of steel could have slashed through that body-breadth of spruce wood. Plainly these river dwellers had magic greater than his own. Not even the beaver's fangs could have made such a clean cut. And on the ground were chips, indicating the use of a heavier, more powerful weapon than his.

Beside the river he found an animal trap of devilish ingenuity. A mink had sprung it, trying to reach a bait, and a weight had fallen. Now the mink lay dead.

Og was hungry, and he might have eaten even this rank flesh, except for his fear of the trap. As it was, he backed away, shivering in awe. Surely some god-like being had contrived the instrument. No mere man, like himself, could even conceive of it.

He crept on with utmost caution. It might be that other such traps lay in the trail, big enough to catch unwelcome visitors like himself. He was pale, trembling, shaken to the core. He walked with the silence of a cat, peering into every thicket. His eyes were no longer narrow, but round. Only the urge and lash of overpowering instinct kept him from turning about and fleeing in panic.

And now he was close to the god men's lair. He knew this fact from the pungency of the air taints. And suddenly a loud sound froze him in the brush with terror.

It was a beast noise, surely. It sounded remotely like the howl of wolves. Yet even Devil-in-the-Twilight would never dare to bespeak himself so close to the giants' lairs; and Og instantly knew that the sound had some other source. What it

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

was he could not imagine, but his hair crept on his head.

Instantly he turned off the trail and vanished in the thickets. Yet even now he did not retreat. Testing the air currents, he worked about until he was straight downwind from the strangers' lairs. The god men could not smell him now. Even if they had powers of scent to match their wolf-like voices, they could not take him in downwind.

Once more he crept forward. The brushwood opened and shut to let him through, silent as swinging doors. So perfect was his stalk that he almost stepped on a ground squirrel before the little furry brother scampered from his path.

The wolf-like noises were ever louder. And now they mingled with other sounds: cries and shouts and long-drawn, guttural mutterings that hurled Og's thumping heart into his throat. Uncouth, harsh though these sounds were, they thrilled the Dawn Man to the marrow of his bones.

Presently he reached the last cover. He parted the branches with his arms and peered through. The sight that met his eyes surpassed his wildest expectations.

There was a cleared space by the river. In this space were a dozen of the strangest-looking lairs that Og could imagine. They were conical in shape, twice as tall as a man, and made of the skins of animals.

These skin houses alone were enough to convince Og that he had found the god men. What mighty killings were here shown! What hunters were these, to have taken so many pelts! And there were no stones to barricade the doors. The houses could hardly keep out the wind, much less a charging bear. Thus it was plain that the demigods who lived therein had no fear of animals. They slept unguarded. They were assured that even the wolf pack, the most powerful hunting unit in the forest, would never dare to stalk and snarl about these lairs!

But what of these shaggy beasts that howled at the doorways? How had these found courage to come here? Apparently they were of the wolf breed—they were of the same size, and had the long, gaunt outline of the Devil-of-the-Twilight—and surely they made bold at the very threshold of the gods. But Og soon hit upon the explanation. He remembered that he himself had dreamed of killing a mother wolf, stealing her cubs, and taking them to his lair to raise. These superhuman beings living in the skin lairs had not only dreamed that same dream, but had made it come true. Thus they had companions to share their lonely nights.

And the wolfish brutes were not only friends and comrades; they were also slaves. This fact became plain as Og watched the village activities. So mighty were these tent dwellers that they could not only tame the savage beasts of the forest, but also make them bend their strong backs in toil.

THERE were scores of other proofs of the villagers' might. Around the doors were voodoo tools without number. There were racks on which fish hung drying. There were long sticks, tipped with fan-like points of some reddish metal. There were meshes made of finely cut caribou leather, the purpose of which Og could not guess. There were stone bowls full of meat, and sticking in a near-by log was a demon tool for cutting wood. Og could account, now, for the smoothly chopped stump he had seen. This tool had a wooden handle, and a head of reddish metal with a broad cutting edge. Not even the beaver wore such a fang.

The greatest of all the wonders was fire. Og froze with awe as he looked at

they're ALL AMERICAN

GOOD OLD
☆GUCKENHEIMER
Whiskey — A Blend. 40% Whiskey. 60% Grain Neutral Spirits. 86 Proof.

☆BURTON'S 51
Whiskey — A Blend. 51% Whiskey. 49% Grain Neutral Spirits. 86.8 Proof.

☆OLD AMERICAN
Straight Bourbon Whiskey. 86 Proof.

☆STILLBROOK
Straight Bourbon Whiskey. 90 Proof.

☆BOURBON SUPREME
A Blend of Straight Whiskies. 90.4 Proof.

THE AMERICAN DISTILLING COMPANY, Inc.
☆
NEW YORK
PEKIN, ILLINOIS
SAN FRANCISCO

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

it. True, the noon cooking was done, and the fires had all but burned out; but even the smoking charcoal remaining was terrible enough! Og could not have endured a greater mystery. If the flames had been leaping, yellow and red, fiercely devouring the logs that the god men cut with their hardened copper tools, surely Og would have turned and fled. This would have been a sight too fearful for wild-beast eyes to bear. As it was, he stood stricken and pale, and the skin crawled on his back.

No wonder the forest folk avoided this spot! It reeked with the acrid smell of wood smoke. The taint was everywhere, obscuring all other scents by which animals might interpret their surroundings. Since they see with their noses more than with their eyes, since they know life almost altogether in terms of scent, here they would have been stricken blind.

And now Og became aware of a most horrible fact. These tent dwellers practised unnatural rites! When they killed their meat in the woodland, they did not merely carry it to their lairs and devour it, as was seemly. They first gave it to the fire! They let the devil flames eat at the flesh. The stench of the burned meat was plain in the air.

No wonder the animals fled in horror from this place! No wonder they were driven to panic by man's faint smell on the wind! Only Og's half-human courage kept him from fleeing too.

As he stood watching, this courage grew. The first shock of the sight passed off, and he could even begin to subdue his horror of the cooked flesh. What remained was largely wonder of a most thrilling kind, born of a wonderful idea that was now taking shape in his brain.

He was slowly coming to a momentous conclusion—that these tent dwellers were not gods, but men! In spite of their unguarded houses, in spite of their tools and their tame wolves, even in spite of the voodoo work of their fire making, they were somehow, some way, his own people. Of course, they were supermen. Not for an instant did he doubt this fact. They were the supreme monarchs of the wild. Yet they were not demons, nor any supernatural beings to fade from his sight in a puff of their own smoke.

He came to this opinion by slow, sure steps. Partly, perhaps, it was inspiration, an instinctive feeling of kinship with these beings; but partly it was intelligent induction of a high order. He began to realize that they were not utterly unlike him in any way, and that their power differed from his only in degree. Their lairs of caribou skin soon ceased to be an unfathomable mystery. These were not of supernatural origin. Indeed, if he had sufficient skins, he might make such lairs himself. He had already made use of leather in a more primitive way. In his cave he had lain on a sun-dried caribou pelt, and he had employed the same material in fashioning a sheath for his knife.

The feel of this knife in his hand reminded him that he, like the villagers, was a wielder of tools. A long spear, leaning beside the door of one of the tents, was only a knife on a stick. The tree-chopping ax was only an elaboration of the knife idea, fitted with a wooden handle. Their only possession that set them definitely apart from him was fire; and some time, somewhere, he might have known this, too. Once or twice, in his cave, he had seen visions of flickering light.

Physically the tent dwellers were quite like him. They were not ghostly white, like the man god he had met that day on the trail. Indeed, they were even darker than himself. They must have lived long in the sun to have tanned their skins to such a deep shade. In this respect they looked as his instincts told him they should look, like his lost comrades of a thousand centuries ago. True, they covered their bodies with skins, but this custom was human and understandable. It was just cold protection, such as he himself might have evolved in time. And though they were not blackly bearded, as he was, the men's faces, as he quickly noted from his concealment, were not utterly naked.

And Og's eyes had told him true. There was no insurmountable barrier between these brown-skinned tent dwellers and himself. Technically, they were of a different branch of the human family; actually, they were closer to this brutish Dawn Man than any white tribe could have been. Certainly they belonged to Og's identical species; they differed from him only in culture.

They were Indians of one of the remote Mackenzie tribes. Their culture was vastly great compared to Og's, but because they dwelt in that great wilderness between the Yukon and the Mackenzie—on a river called the Nahhane, and far from any trading post—they were the least civilized of any Northwest natives. They had no rifles. They still sped the feathered arrow. Their spears were tipped with copper

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

points; copper hardened in the long ago, by a process forgotten and whispered no more in the medicine-lodges of the tribe.

Yes, these tent dwellers were men, not gods. And how would this affect Og's long search? Why did his eyes narrow and his temples throb when an Indian girl emerged from her teepee and bent to fill her arms with wood?

THIS native girl had never appeared on a magazine cover. She was not at all the type that adorns calendars and is portrayed beside a mountain rill. Rather she was simply a typical young Indian woman of the Upper Nahhane, untouched by white man's civilization and not in the least suggestive of the white man's ideal of beauty. She was extremely dark. Except for her long, straight hair she could have passed for a mulatto. She was not of the tall plains tribes, but was short and heavily built. She wore neither beads nor feathers, but a hooded parka and leggings of caribou leather.

In spite of all this, she made an absorbing picture. She fitted into the background with that accord which Nature always seems able to achieve, and which is the naturalist's delight. Her skin was somehow like the forest browns—glossy and as full of tawny lights as the fur of an otter. Her sturdy figure suggested the strong sub-arctic animals; even her garments were so chosen, by centuries of selection, that they possessed not only utility but a certain harmony with her surroundings that almost constituted beauty in this wild country.

On a city's streets she would have seemed grotesque. In the clothes of civilization she would have been called ugly. Even in a painting she would not have been pleasing, unless the artist had also portrayed her proper surroundings. Yet here, among the skin tents and on the banks of this unmapped river, she was more than a pleasant sight. She lighted up the picture; she gave a warmth to the chill background that would stir the pulses even of civilized men.

And when Og looked at her, he knew that his long quest was done. He knew now what he had not known before—the lodestone that had drawn him over the mountains and the wild northern rivers, through the hushed forests and across the desolate tundras. He knew at last the nature of the unrest that had preyed on him so long. He knew that here was his journey's end, and the beginning of the fulfilment of a summer's dream. He knew, beyond all doubt, that here was his heart's desire.

Her darkness did not repel him. Even to Ogden Rutheford, the sophisticate, had come dreams of dusky skins, smooth and warm to the touch. Men loved dark women for fifty thousand years before the cold north—and the shade of the ancient Lithuanian forests—ever wiped the pigment from a human face. The women of Og's dreams had all been dark; and indeed the Dawn Man could conceive of no other type.

The girl's face and arms were silky and naked, and this was as it should be. He felt no displeasure at her hairless skin. The men that moved through Og's nightly dreams, and who, even in daydreams, his jungle mind occasionally conjured up, were usually rather hairy, but the women were smooth as flower petals. This strange fact could be readily explained. At that period of time that Og represented—ages before the gray dawn of civilization, yet far along in the history of the human animal—women had already been bred hairless. The male preference for a warm, smooth skin had, by the selective processes of nature, left its mark on the race.

He could see the dusky smoothness of her arms, as the sleeves of her parka fell back; her cheeks had a warm, dark glow. As she came nearer, he realized she had a friendly, smiling, good-natured face.

And what did this latter qualification mean to Og? The answer was not far to seek. This being who stood entranced at the edge of the clearing was not a beast but a man. Of culture and civilization he knew nothing, but he was already the heir to a thousand centuries of wife-cherishing. He was not a bear, to meet his mate in the forest, journey with her for a moon or two, and then go his solitary way. He was not a wolf, to devour the mother of his cubs in times of famine. Already he stood head and shoulders above any other animal of the Wild. He was a human being, with the beginning of human ideas, with that capacity for exalted love which is man's alone.

He loved this girl's face. If he knew beauty at all, this was beautiful to him. It made him feel warm, and elated, and generous. He could not be cruel to her. He would protect her from danger as bravely as he could protect himself. He wanted her to live, to remain in his sight. He could feel any pain in her body almost as poignantly as his own pain.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

He loved her. This was an unqualified fact. He wanted her with that childish intensity that a child wants love. His heart ached for her, till it was like sickness. He did not stop to think whether or not she might learn to love him. Such a thought was utterly beyond the Dawn Man. It would have required a reversal of viewpoint of which his brute mind was incapable. He only knew that he could not bear to live another day without her.

For a moment she stood quite close to him, looking dreamily into the wood. His heart almost stopped beating. The thought came that he might leap forth from his hiding-place, snatch her in his arms, and dart away.

The thought of holding her fast in his arms, intoxicated him. It almost made him forget the first and greatest of all laws, self-preservation. To attempt to abduct the girl now, in broad daylight would simply mean his own death. The tent dwellers would be on his trail in an instant, and their wolf slaves would howl at his heels, and their fanged sticks would go whizzing past his ears. He could not escape them in their own valley. They would cut him off, as the wolf pack cuts off the fleet caribou. And presently the voodoo weapons of the god men would pierce his heart, and he would lie as the wolverene had lain, curiously huddled in the red spruce needles.

True, he might hold her for a moment at least. But on the other hand if he could but master his heart and await his opportunity, he might hold her and keep her, too.

His skin tingled, and his heart stopped beating, and he trembled all over; yet his body held. He did not leap from his ambush. And presently the girl sighed and reentered her tent.

THROUGH the remainder of the afternoon Og lurked in the thickets. Hour after hour he crouched without motion. Never had he so proved his long schooling in the Wild. Never had he so shown his kinship with the beasts, nor the superb development of his instincts. A wolf can do this—hover in ambush with no more motion that the shadow of a stone, and a snake can lie lifeless as a stone itself; but it is hardly a human faculty. Moreover, he felt no fatigue. He knew how to relax every muscle.

Through a rift in the brush he could watch the village activities. He saw men come back from fishing, their shoulders bowed with strings of salmon. He saw the women carrying water, and he watched the children's games. When the dusk fell, the villagers built their supper fires in front of their tents.

Fortunately for Og, these fires were little and low. They were fed just enough fuel to heat the cooking pots; and thus a lazy breed of men were saved many a step at wood hauling, and many an ax blow. Low fires, and close-leaping shadows, and an occasional red gleam leaping over a dusky face—this was ever an Indian village scene at night. Flickering so wanly in the gloom, the flame gods were not so terrible as Og had anticipated. He was awed by the flickering lights, but he could not see them devour the strong, tough spruce wood, and he was spared the crackle and roar and leaping glory of a white man's fire. Because of the gloom, he failed to see the voodoo rite which he had feared most of all—the giving of animal flesh to the yellow flame.

He did not run away, and indeed, he soon forgot to stare at the distant, flickering lights. He was lost in an even greater mystery—a mounting flame in his own breast. Meanwhile he watched a girl who squatted at the door of her father's teepee.

He could see her but dimly. Only at intervals did a fire-beam leap to her face and show the long, dark slits of her eyes. Her tent was on the near side of the encampment. The dark trees looked gray and ghostly; the river was burnished bright as Og's knife. On the girl's tawny face the moon wrought magic beyond any voodoo or demon or fire.

This was the love moon. It had guided a lover to his heart's desire a thousand centuries before it ever lighted the barley fields for reapers.

Now Luna was at the full—and Og's heart, too, was full. The ancient lunacy swept him again.

In the hushed dark, the wolf dogs howled. Two gaunt males met in battle—for an ancient cause—and a man shouted and separated them. Beyond the fires, the forest throbbed and thrilled. There was whispering within the tent walls.

As Og watched, his eyes themselves like blue moons in the dark, a stalwart brave walked between the tents and sat down beside the girl. The two exchanged shy glances, and often their hands touched.

The girl seemed flattered by the visit. No wonder—this was Red Hawk, the village chief, hardly more than twice the girl's age, and the ablest hunter, the swift-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

est runner, and the strongest warrior in the village. The girl's father, squatting and chewing meat at the edge of the fire-light, grunted in approval.

But there was one who did not grunt. There was one who looked on in deadly silence. This was an eavesdropper who had crept up within fifty feet of the blaze. His eyes glared like those of the mother wolf, when the lynx menaces her cubs; and in his heart was hate and fury and madness such as no mere beast could ever understand.

Time after time his hand crept toward his knife. Time after time he crouched to spring, and checked himself just in time. Yet the long, tense minutes rolled by, to find his blade still bright and his silent vigil unbroken.

The hour of accounting was not yet at hand. He must wait, as the wolf waits in ambush. It was no part of the wilderness creed to wage a hopeless fight. There was a time for slaying and a time for war. Only the wolverene, his dark being haunted by visions of blood and death, forgets in his demoniac fury the first law of self-preservation.

In the end, Og and Red Hawk must clash. When that time came, one of the two must go on, and one must stay. There could be no compromise in the settling of that score. One might behold again the glory of dawn, the glare of sunset, and the love moon rising in the sky; but the other must sleep soundly in some red-spattered thicket. One might still run with his shadow over the hills, but the other must depart to the land of shadows. In the meantime, Og must wait and listen and watch his chance.

THE moon sailed like a white war-boat through the sky. One by one the little village fires glowed red and died away. Most of the tribesmen had now sought their pallets. Even the old meat chewer, the girl's father, had vanished within the tent. Og and the two by the fire had the darkness to themselves.

Red Hawk and the girl still sat in the moonlight, talking in low tones. What this succession of sounds meant, Og had no idea; he only knew that they bridged a gap of loneliness he might not cross. Thereby these two souls were brought close, and the haunting shadows of solitude were dispelled. More than their tents, their tools, their tame wolves, even more than their fires, these mouth sounds marked the twain as beings far above Og's level. Despair burdened his heart.

Once the girl laughed. It was a low, deep-throated sound, far indeed from the rippling peal of carefree mirth that her civilized sister utters, yet to Og this was music to exalt his soul. Of this, at least, he could guess the meaning. It was a cry of triumph more eloquent than any shout he had ever uttered upon the bodies of his slain. It betokened no mere victory of blood, no mere mastery over a beaten fellow creature, but mastery over life, over the merciless, vengeful forces of nature.

No beast could utter such a sound. Instinct-driven, hopeless and persecuted slave of the elemental powers, a beast can laugh no more than he can weep. The nearest approach to it is the wild broken shriek of the coyotes, which is a hideous mockery of laughter born of despair; but even so, it lifts the wolf clan somehow into the mid-region between beast and man. Og himself, fear-driven automaton of action and reaction—his soul but a dim flame newly lighted in his jungle brain—knew not how to laugh!

As Og listened, he knew that he would give his life, if need be, for this One-Who-Laughed. He came to this knowledge as simply as comes a shepherd dog to the feet of its master. She was a human being, in many ways like himself, and he had answered her love call over the wastes, but yet her soul was of the gods. It was not of this earth, on which he had but recently learned to stand erect. It had risen a little way into the blue sky.

And thus Og stumbled onto the real meaning of civilization. It is not cold intellect. Rather, it is a laugh in the darkness. In a sense, it is the conquest of nature, it is the freeing of man's earth-bound soul, even though his feet are still in the dust. And thus it might appear that even Ogden Rutheford had not understood the civilization that he had so adored. Certainly he had not realized its glorious potentialities.

If it could raise the human animal so high that he can laugh and weep—granting that his laughter is at times merely the harsh echo of his animal cries—it might ultimately free him from many other of his brute limitations. If it could make an articulate man out of a dumb beast, it might make a living god out of babbling man; and here the thought ends, at last, in mystery and transcendentalism far and far removed from the chronicles of Og.

Og's long watch was now almost at an

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

end. The girl turned presently, shook her head to some question of Red Hawk's, and vanished into her tent. The chief lingered a while, plainly hoping for a change of heart on the girl's part, and then strode away. Og's hour was almost at hand.

The little noises of the village passed one by one away. No more did the dying fire crack at long intervals, a sound that was darkly terrible to Og's superstitious fancies. He thought it was the voice of the flame god, calling for animal flesh. The whisperings in the tents had died like a dying wind. Even the wolf dogs drowsed beside the dead fires. Sometimes they whined and growled in their sleep—remembering the jungle life that was so close to Og—but they howled no more at the moon, and no more they stared, with raised neck bristles, into the hushed dark.

Og fought for courage. This thing he was about to do was a mighty thing. Surely it would arouse the tribe to war and swift and tireless would be the pursuit of the enemy. They would set their wolf dogs on his trail. They would attack him with their voodoo tools, fang-pointed sticks, and little barbed shafts that whistled on invisible wings through the air. If they caught him they would give his flesh to their fire gods. The very thought of this latter filled him with terror, and horror curdled his blood.

It might be that he would enrage the gods, too. The girl was heaven-born—had he not heard her laugh beside her fire? While he was only a brute thing of the forest. They might pour forth their vengeance upon him—storm and avalanche and thunder stone. They might afflict him in ways he could not dream.

Still he did not shrink away. He grew hot and cold, and the moon saw the whites of his eyes, but his running feet were not heard yet on the hard-packed trail. And now Og was showing godlike qualities, too. This bravery now was no beast bravery, but the high-born courage of man's dominance over all the other species.

Beasts are often reckless in the mating season. They lunge through the brushwood oblivious to ordinary dangers. Yet even the lordly moose, called by his cow across the marsh, will turn and flee in frantic terror from the scent of a hunter. Og, on the other hand, was bravely facing not only the fire maker, but a hundred other terrors dimly guessed in his demon-ridden mind.

Such was his love for She-Who-Laughed. It had become his first law, even greater than the law of self-preservation. He would die sooner than forego her; that was his simple vow. And presently he stole forth, out of the brush covert.

Never was his stalk so perfect. Not even the wolf dogs, asleep at a near-by cooking rack, heard his step in the dust. He crept as noiselessly as his own shadow, under the moon.

AS HE approached nearer, the dogs snarled in their sleep, but not yet did they waken. Plainly they has lost some of their vigilance taught by the Wild. Their senses had been dulled by the reek of smoke that hung everywhere. An untamed wolf would have been at his throat by now.

Shadow-like he stole to the girl's tent. His dark hand lifted the flap, and the moonlight leaped in ahead of him. It lighted up, with a dusky shine, the face of She-Who-Laughed.

Og looked at her long and intently. His wild heart swelled to pain. She lay in a short-sleeved, parka-like robe of white caribou-leather, her dark arm flung free of her body. Presently she stirred and wakened.

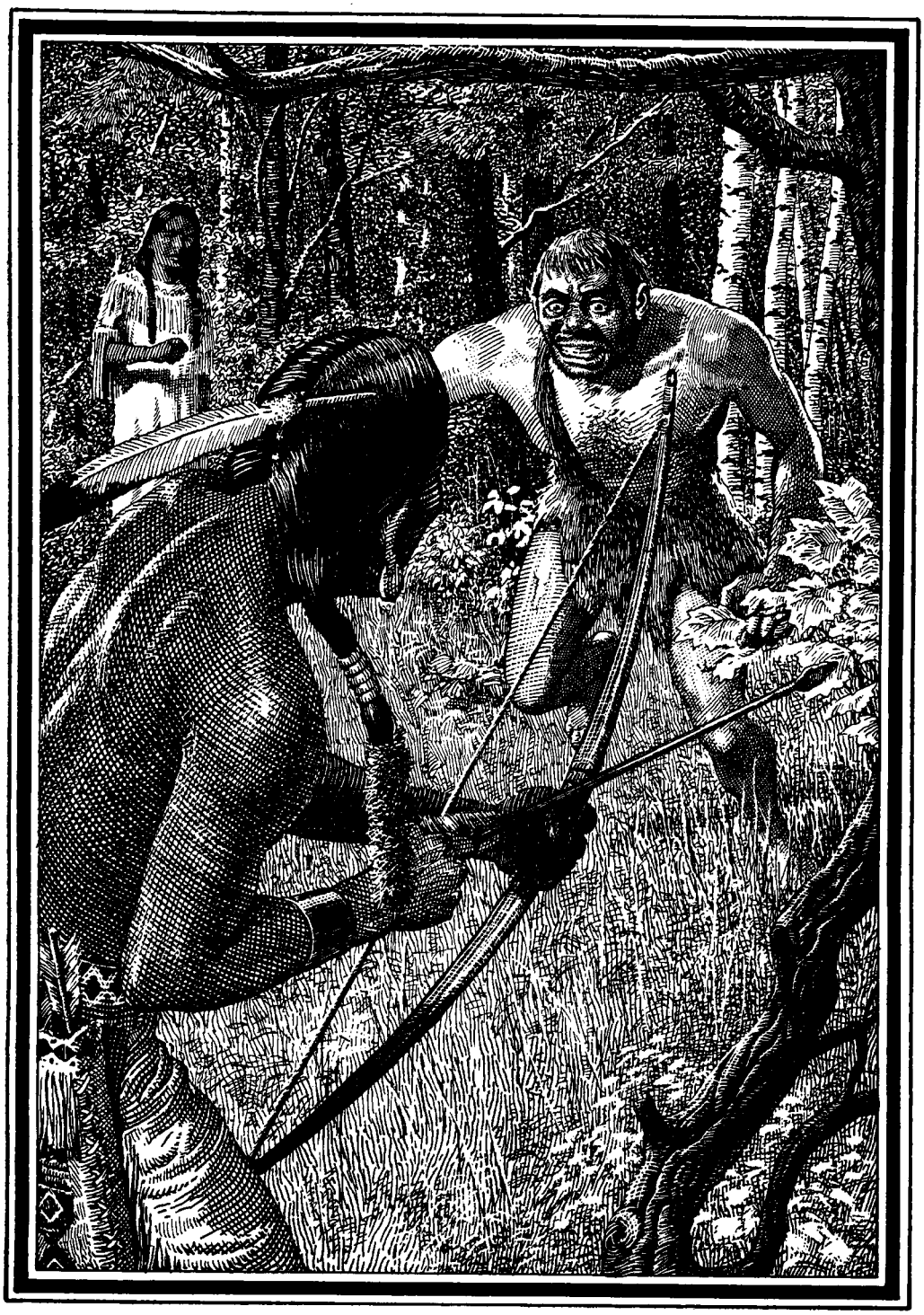
Her black eyes slowly fixed themselves on Og. He saw her start, and then terror washed her face white. Her mouth opened to scream.

But that sound never came. Og leaped, and his great hand closed the girl's lips. The time of waiting, of watching and stalking, was now done, and his muscles leaped to life. As he covered her mouth he snatched her into his arms.

The next instant he was running out of the tent door into the sheltering dark. The girl was struggling with all her limbs, and now, to protect his throat from her clawing hands, he had to free her mouth. Her savage screams rang back into the waking village.

There was uproar enough behind him. The dogs were all baying and barking and making vicious forays to the edge of the forest. Yet they dared not come too far. Too well they knew the dangers that lurked and breathed in the black thickets. There had been times before when the wild beasts had come up out of their Wild and raided the village, usually during times of winter famine; and slashing fangs had taught the curs caution. For all they knew, this was a trick to lure them into ambush. The wild forest lords whom they had betrayed were always scheming to kill them. The wolves, particularly—their

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



Plainly, Red Hawk did not mean to miss a third time. . . .

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

own brothers whom they had forsaken for the men god's scraps, and who hated them with a hatred without parallel in forest or field—loved to catch them away from the village fires and crack their bones.

For all they knew, the woods-smelling creature who had raided the tent was himself a great white wolf. So befuddled were they with smoke that they could not tell for sure. Only one thing they knew—that he was not of the tents, but of the open; that the dew had washed him at night and no taint of smoke was upon him.

The villagers were likewise raising their voices in clamor. There were shoutings from tent to tent with confused cries that carried loud and clear on the wind to Og. Of course he could not understand the meaning of the words, but he knew what they forfended—death and fire, if ever he fell into their hands!

One man was raving in fury, like a bear cheated of its meal. Who this was Og could guess only too well. Many of the other cries were thin and high; and Og might understand them best of all. The wolf dogs were not alone in their fears of a white specter in the darkness. Even the men gods had not forgotten the ancient terror of a beast that leaped from the black thickets and snatched, and leaped away.

They looked with awe at an empty pallet, and they grew wide-eyed at the sight of a naked footprint in the dust. They stood close to one another; and it might be that some of the young squaws looked not with hate, but with a queer wistfulness into the now-silent thickets. At first Red Hawk could hardly rally his braves. They seemed to want to stay by the tents and to build high fires. They had little desire to go running forth into the moonlit Wild on the track of such a thief.

But Red Hawk was a strong chief, and at last he got his men in hand. Armed to the teeth, they pushed out into the ocean of the dark. It was noticeable that they advanced in a compact group, and that their wolf dogs whined at their heels, and that they let their great chief, the fury-maddened Red Hawk, walk in front.

CHAPTER VI

FUGITIVES' TRAIL

MEANWHILE Og had thrown his caution to the winds. He was risking everything on desperate flight, in putting as great a distance as possible between him and the wolfish pursuers. With dread he listened to the crazed uproar behind him, to howlings of fierce dogs and the shouting of savage men. For all he knew, they were already on his trail, killers thirsty for his blood.

Must he be overtaken before he fairly started? If so, it would be that he was vanquished by a woman. To the girl in his arms, not to those yelling tribesmen behind, would belong the victory. She alone might justly howl in triumph over his still form; she alone should win songs of praise when at last his flesh was given to the flames. Were it not for her, he could escape from these pursuers as from so many clumsy bears. He would leave them moiling and yapping on a cold trail. He was Og, the wolf man, and his limbs moved like wings of waterfowl.

Nor was it merely her weight that impeded him. This he scarcely felt at all. Rather it was her wild-cat efforts to free herself. She was not screaming now—it would not be for She-Who-Laughed to waste her breath either in vain pleas or hopeless cries for help—and besides, she was using her mouth to a much more effective purpose. Blood of a mink was this dark girl of the Nahhane tribes! Time and again her teeth met in his shoulder, and except for the fact that he held her too close, she would have torn his throat. Meanwhile her arms were flailing, striking with all her lynxlike strength, impeding him by her struggles, and her bare feet were kicking at him.

He could not restrain her. Nor could he persuade her gently—except by long hours under the moon. So he did the first thing his instincts prompted. He snarled, and holding her out with one arm, smote with the other. His hand was not closed, but his fingers were curled, and it dealt a curious raking stroke that might have been particularly enlightening to naturalists who know the chimpanzee. It struck the side of the girl's head, and it left a red streak along the edge of her hair.

Yet the blow did not kill her. Perhaps Og had not meant it to. However, he was not in the least aware of purposely checking it; whatever mercy it possessed was born of deep-seated instinct. It was only an expedient, and it had no fury and blood lust behind it to make it deadly. He had put into it only a tithe of the power that lived in his steely biceps.

Yet the tithe was enough. The girl collapsed like a garment in his arms. No more her teeth sought his flesh, and no

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

more did he have to hold her thrashing arms. He swung her over his back and hurried on.

He could run now! Let the porcupines who lived by the village try to catch him! The girl's weight was no more than that of a moose calf, such as he had carried many times. His great strength was unshaken. His lungs sucked deep the cold night air. The founts of his vitality flowed in an undiminished stream.

He ran for almost two miles—not sprinting, but with a long, fleet stride. He was breathing like a winded buck, yet he was still far from exhaustion. Now he began a game of fox and hound.

Part of what followed was simply instinct. It came down straight from similar games of death, played in the moonlit forest since the world was young. Partly he was putting into practise the lessons he had learned in the Wild.

He waded into a small creek that flowed across the trail. He came out shortly, left plain tracks in the mud, and then ran across a thick carpet of pine needles where prints would not show at all. Then, with what seemed superhuman strength, he climbed a tree—still holding the girl with one arm—and working himself over to a near-by tree, dropped again in the creek.

He followed the water path a long way. At last he came to a low-hanging branch that he could reach, and once more he sought the treetops. By prodigious labor and utter disregard of danger he was able to work himself from tree to tree, only occasionally touching his foot to the ground for a distance of almost a hundred yards.

All this was cunning of a high order. Also it was bravery not to be despised. All the time he was creeping laboriously through the branches the man pack was drawing closer. The dogs were howling almost in his ears; he could hear the individual voices of his pursuers. By the time he had completed his trail effacing, the hunters had reached the creek and now they were beating along its banks, seeking his tracks.

He swung at last to the ground and made off up the ridge. He did not run now, but moved at an easy trot. Beyond the ridge he found a creek that washed out his tracks again.

He followed this stream to its mother springs, then slipped into the big timber of the highland parks. Four hours more he traveled, until the rising sun finally forced him to rest.

The girl was still unconscious. He laid her down, and with devilish cunning put a light dead limb of cottonwood tree across her body. Its twigs were brittle, its withered leaves rustled at a touch. She could not possibly move or get up without making some slight sound. Even Og, whose step was light as a panther's could not escape from such a trap in silence.

He lay beside her and slept. He was not yet ready to woo her. This was not chivalry; it was only nature, untainted and strong. He loved her still, more and more every time he glanced at her, but he was tired, now.

He did not fear that she could slip away unheard. He slept like a wolf; and thus the slightest rustle of one leaf upon another could hurl him from his slumber.

Toward noon the girl wakened with a cry. She sprang up and started to run; instantly Og leaped straight out of his dream in her pursuit. In six strides he had caught her.

She did not struggle now. She looked at him in dumb entreaty, meanwhile trying to shake the stupor from her brain. He held her gently, to show he meant no harm to her, and bending, pressed his mouth to hers.

He did not know that he was kissing her. He was simply obeying a clear-voiced instinct.

Her lips were warm, soft and moist. He would have smiled at her, had he known how. But the smile is the father of the laugh, and as such he knew it not. It was not for Og, his soul still enchained by the demons of the Wild, to make the signs of godhead. He did, however, utter low grunts which meant approval and friendship.

The girl did not respond to his kiss. She still seemed dazed. Yet she did not again try to escape, and gave him no trouble when they started off into the woods. She walked dully and quietly at his side.

PRESENTLY a porcupine crossed his path, and he killed it with his knife. As he stood over the bleeding carcass he looked up to her for approval. He wanted her to notice the blade and to admire his mastery over it. Thereby she might see that he was a man, too, with voodoo weapons of his own, and not think him a two-legged beast of the forest. He hoped that she thus might warm to him, and establish a kind-to-kind communion. But she gave him no sign and only looked blankly into his face.

He ate his fill, then offered some of the meat to her. And now, for the first time,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a thought passed between them. He understood perfectly that the vigorous shaking of her head meant refusal.

How did he know this sign? Why is it that among practically all people a nod means yes and a shake means no? Certainly there is no prearranged sign language between the Innuits of the Arctic and the Kafirs of the Cape.

The up-and-down motion of the head is a conventionalized symbol of eating. The muzzle is lowered to tear meat from a carcass, and raised again for chewing. Simply, the sign means "I eat with you," or "I accept food from you," which is certainly the simplest way of expressing friendship—agreement—satisfaction—affirmation. On the other hand a sideways motion of the head, depicting a disdainful sniffing over unacceptable food, means "I won't eat with you," or "I refuse your food." This in time has come to mean general refusal—disagreement—dislike—and finally, negation.

The sign has been practiced so long that it has become part of man's racial heritage. Thus Og had cognizance of it—the beginning of what might be human understanding between She-Who-Laughed and himself.

Now there appeared a new difficulty. Had the barrier of silence broken down between them only to reveal a greater barrier of caste? Was the girl sickened at the sight of raw meat? Not this daughter of the Nahhane wilderness. True, her people usually cooked or semicooked their meat—but often she had eaten uncooked fish, and certain parts of the raw viscera of some animals were considered a delicacy among her people. She refused the food because she was not yet ready to perform a social act with her captor. She made her meal on ripe blueberries that grew in profusion on the hills.

They continued their journey. She walked at his side, and from time to time she glanced shyly into his face, but not yet did she offer to make friends. Whether or not she was plotting escape, meanwhile trying to put him off his guard, he could not tell.

As the hours passed, the effects of the blow he had dealt her began to wear off. She began to take stock of the situation. She possessed the typically keen Indian mind, and she knew, presently, that this being at her side was no ogre of the forest. Indeed he was just a human being like herself. No insurmountable barrier existed between them.

True, they could not yet talk together. However, the gift of speech does not carry so much weight with an Indian as with a white woman. Her language contained not more than five hundred words in all, and since her life and her mental processes were comparatively simple, they could get along fairly well with the use of sign language.

At first she thought that he must belong to one of the Yukon tribes, to the west—perhaps he was from the Pelley or the Stewart; but she was soon forced to dismiss this idea. His skin was too light. Deeply sunburned and tanned though he was, she missed the dark pigment that marks an Indian. Besides, his face was not at all like the faces of the braves. It was too hairy; and his brow was too straight, his eyes too light in color. He lacked the high cheek-bones that everywhere marked her people.

Was he a white man? Certainly he did not fill the description. According to the stories of an old man who had once visited the trading post at Fort Liard, the white men were gods. They had fire-sticks that killed at five hundred paces; the old man had seen them. Moreover, he had possessed one—procured by a trade for his beaver pelts—but he had lost it on the way home. The white men wore garments of many colors, so the tales went, and did not go half naked like this tall being beside her. Also, they had wondrous tools and struck fire with little sticks, and performed all kinds of miracles.

But if Og was not a white man, what was he? Certainly no a god. He was even closer to the earth than she herself. Yet she found no fault with this fact. She did not desire a god for a mate; she wanted a man.

A man he surely was. His strength thrilled her. And she was not sure that she objected to his rough wooing. It showed that he appreciated her, and wanted her very badly indeed.

Nor did she object to the fact that in social evolution she was a hundred thousand years and more beyond him. Indeed, she might not have known this fact. The civilization of her people was old and complex, containing all the elements of great social organizations, but they did not yet make a fetish of culture. They still lived close to the earth, close to the realities. Indeed, her only real concern about him was the question whether or not she loved him.

She was still debating this point when

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a startling thing happened. Og's vigilant eye had seen a strange track in the trail, and just as he bent to examine it, there was a twanging sound in the thickets. It was a sharp, clear note, as of a tuning fork, and the song that it began might easily be a song of death. There was a whistling, humming demon between the trees.

It was not by poor shooting on a bowman's part that Og lived on. It was simply the fortune of the game. If he had been standing erect, the feathered hornet from the brush would surely have stung his heart. As it was, a darting shadow whistled within two inches of his throat.

Clear the eye and steady the hand of the marksman! Not even his jealous hate had thrown off his aim. The accident of his track, left in the dust and causing his foe to bend down, had tricked him evilly, but there were still plenty of arrows in his quiver. And in his heart was a quiet, simple resolve that, unless he were tricked by death itself, this ravisher of the tents would never leave the glade alive.

This was no vain threat of a braggart. Rather it was the stern will of a brave warrior, schooled by long power. And, indeed, Red Hawk was a brave of the old tradition. He was chief of the tribe by virtue of his courage and strength. Moreover, it was no mere coincidence that Red Hawk himself, rather than one of his men, should be the one to settle the final score with Og. He, too, had loved She-Who-Laughed. That love had driven him on ahead of all the rescue party. He alone had been able to follow where Og led.

Now Og must fight for his life. He had made free in the village, now he must make accounting. Of all the enemies he had ever faced, of all the killers whom he had met fang to fang, this enemy and killer who waited him here was the most deadly and the most terrible.

RED HAWK'S time of waiting was done. Nothing more was to be gained by hovering in the thickets and taking aim like a rifleman. Now he must fight in the open, trusting to his tribal gods to drive his quick, chance arrows to their mark.

Og was no longer standing motionless, a perfect target. When the arrow had whistled in his ears, he had leaped catlike, for a tree. Perhaps his first impulse, born of ancient instinct, was to catch a limb and swing up into the boughs, but if so, the mad act was never carried through. Quick intelligence came to his rescue and saved him a mistake that would have surely been the last mistake of his life.

These humming hornets from Red Hawk's quiver were not earth-bound, like four-legged beasts of prey. They would seek him out in the leafy bowers and send him spinning to the ground. So instead of climbing, he dodged squirrel-like around the trunk.

Red Hawk snatched a second arrow from his quiver and slipped it onto his bowstring. Holding the bow ready, he began to stalk his prey. His eyes were fiery; the murder-hate which is so easily aroused in all the children of the red race contorted his dusky face.

So far he showed nothing of fear. He was the hunter, not the hunted. It was for Og, not himself, to dodge and scramble and squeal. What he had assumed at first—that Og was armed with long-range weapons perhaps better than his own—had not proven true.

Red Hawk's gods had been good to him.

Would he destroy a helpless foe without mercy? Yes, and without a qualm. True, he was a brave man when bravery was re-

Service Manager Does Himself Service

James M. Davis* switched to Calvert —found today's best blend is also today's very best buy!

*of Boise, Idaho

CALVERT RESERVE BLENDED WHISKEY—86.8 PROOF—65% GRAIN NEUTRAL SPIRITS. CALVERT DISTILLERS CORP., NEW YORK CITY

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

quired—more than once he had waged noble warfare against great odds; but like all creatures who live close to nature, he preferred that the odds should lie heavily on his own side. Sportsmanship is a term that no savage understands. Indeed, the thought that he might slay the robber with no risk of his own life exalted him like a strong drink.

It would be but child's play to drive Og from behind the tree. The trunk was small, it hardly shielded the foe's broad shoulders. Red Hawk began to work to one side, his eyes narrowed and glittering, his arrow ready at the bowstring.

Then a surprising thing happened. Og's head and arm suddenly appeared from behind the trunk. It was only a brief glimpse—not long enough to give Red Hawk a chance to shoot—and it changed the entire character of the battle.

Indeed, this was not a battle at all until now. It was merely an attempt at an assassination. But when Og's bearded face and long, sweeping, tawny arm came into view, all the gods of war wakened from their sleep to watch.

It was apparent, now, that Og had made the most of his scanty opportunities. He had not been meanly cowering in terror, waiting for the death stroke. He was no rabbit, this Og, to expire without a fight, but the Dawn Man—the warrior son of a most terrible warrior breed. Instead of yielding, he had rallied all his faculties of mind and body. And his first act, when the tree hid him, was to snatch up a two-pound rock.

It had lain in the tree roots, ready to his hand. No doubt it had been placed there by the gods. And he hurled it with a howl.

If it struck where Og intended, the fight would end promptly. Not even the skull of a bear could have withstood that whizzing missile. It had all the frightful power of Og's great arm behind it—a gorilla might which he himself did not know he possessed. But his aim was none too sure. He had stood in a cramped position, and his horror of the arrows had made him throw too hastily. Also, the irregular shape of the stone made it swerve to one side. It missed Red Hawk by the width of his body.

Even so, the blow was not wasted. It proved of immense indirect advantage. It wakened terror in the chief's heart. It broke up his reckless assault which would have surely ended, in a moment more, with an arrow-spitted body in the thicket, and, ultimately, in great rejoicing in the tents of the Nahhane tribesmen. It checked him, and thus gave Og a moment's respite from the menace of the bow and the winged death.

Indeed, the whizzing rock had all but unnerved Red Hawk. He heard it strike with a crash; glancing back, his widening eyes beheld a two-inch spruce stalk broken in twain. Shaken, his fingers slipped from the taut bowstring. Whether he shot intentionally in reckless terror, or whether he let the arrow go by accident, probably he himself did not know: he only knew that the shaft flew wide, and the helpless prey that he had thought to dance upon, by now had evolved into the most formidable enemy he had ever faced.

There was another consequence of this rock throwing that might prove of importance later. It had a profound effect upon the single spectator. Up to this time—from the instant that the first shaft had hummed from the thicket—She-Who-Laughed had taken Og's defeat for granted. She knew he had no long-range weapons, and besides, she had been taught to believe that Red Hawk was invincible. His quiver had been signally charmed by the shaman, the medicine man of the Nahhane tribe, and his arrows were the very darts of death. Such game as came within his bow range never escaped alive.

Certainly, she had thought, her adventure was over. The tawny bearded man at her side would perish, and she would return to the tribe with his conqueror. Thus fate would decide a hard question. She would grind the bear-root and dry the fish by the tent of the chief.

SHE had felt but little regret. The abduction had been thrilling, and in the last few hours Og had begun to please her fancy; but there was also a thrill in this intervention by the chief. It was a mighty tribute to her charms that Red Hawk, the head man of her people and the favored of the gods, would have come so far to rescue her. She had waited indifferently for the second shaft to seek Og's heart.

Now her eyes flew wide open. Og was not to die tamely, after all. Without bow and arrow, with only his hands and the stones of the earth for weapons, he would fight valiantly for his life. At the same time—and this truth shot fire through her veins—he would be fighting for her.

To keep her! To hold her, and never let her go! For the love of her, he would defy even Chief Red Hawk.

Her brown skin crept and tingled as she

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

realized what she was about to witness. It would not be merely a tame and uninteresting killing. Og would not die like a sledge dog, speared for meat in the starving times of winter. Instead, she would see a battle that would live in the annals of the tribe. It would be such a fight as her wild heart loved—bloody, well-matched, ruthless, and to the death. And it was all for her.

Instantly she felt reawakened interest in Og. He was not only a rough wooer, but a valiant fighter! He dared to fight back even against Red Hawk's arrows. And such a fight he could wage! As he hurled the rock, she saw his muscles leap and knot under his tawny skin. He was a champion worthy of the name.

Finally, the nature of his defense had a curious, instinctive appeal to her. There was something magnificently brutal in this stone throwing. It wakened a savage emotion in her own breast. She was close to the earth, herself—this daughter of the Nahhane tribe—and violence appealed to her. The sight of Og's great arm hurling the stone, his bearded face and his wide eyes and his mouth opened like a beast's, seemed to recall old legends of her tribe, old romance, old thrills now all but forgotten.

Would she leap into the fight at Og's side? No, she would not go so far. In the first place, she could not raise a hand against the chief of her tribe. The thought could not occur to her. There was no precedent for such a blasphemy; and besides, it would be against her best interests. Although she admired Og, more and more every minute, and indeed, might soon learn to love him, she was not yet ready to cast her fortunes with his. It might be that he would die, here under the trees. The swift arrows of Red Hawk were only too likely to prevail. And she did not desire to lie beside him, as she would surely do if she took sides with him now. Red Hawk would surely crush her skull if she aided his enemy; and the sun and the stars and the moon of love would know her no more.

Perhaps she did not take sides with him even in her heart. Perhaps she was that human rarity, a genuine neutral. It would be the eternal squaw in her, not to care which of these two fighters finally conquered. The one who survived would deserve her love—would prove most worthy to be the father of her children—and the one who died would be forgotten. She was a fatalist, to a degree no city poseur could even dream of; and she would let fate decide.

And Og could bless his gods even for this neutrality. So easily might she have had a pot of her own to boil. Seeing his helplessness, the one she-wolf in her heart might have sprung forth, and the cruelty of the squaw—not a legend, but a fact which half-forgotten wars made known only too well—might be invoked against him. And surely, then, the carrion-loving bears would feast to their fill here tonight.

As Red Hawk shot his second arrow, Og leaped forward. A yelling monster of hate and fury, he wanted to close before his enemy could shoot the third time. Now the devil bow was empty, but its slack string hummed like a hornet's nest, and Og knew that in a second more it would loose its winged death again. He lunged with wide-stretching arms, his knife slicing through the forest shadows.

But Red Hawk would not meet him yet. Og began his charge at a distance of thirty paces, and the chief's heart might beat five times more before the white blade sought it. During these five heartbeats he had time to launch another arrow.

He had just wasted two shots. The first had been a fair miss, for which he was not to blame; but the second was a shame to his chiefdom. A squawlike panic had flung it wide of its mark. Plainly he did not intend to miss the third time. He appeared to rally, and his wide eyes narrowed and fixed themselves upon the breast of his advancing foe. Meanwhile, he snatched an arrow from its quiver.

He fitted the arrow to the string. His arm leaped back, in a strong, swift, drawing motion, to draw his big bow. And still the arrow pointed its red-gold shaft directly toward Og's breast. In another instant it would leap forth!

Still he held. He seemed to be waiting to make sure. He looked cold and steady as a tried white sportsman, meeting a charging grizzly on the game fields. And suddenly events took a new turn.

Between the chief and his roaring, charging foe grew a medium-sized aspen tree. From its trunk projected a horizontal limb, about eight feet from the ground and directly over the path of the advancing Dawn Man. Red Hawk had not even noticed the bough—it was above the track of his arrow—but it caught Og's eye as he plunged nearer. Somehow it touched a button that was wired to his motor centers, which in turn struck a spark in his muscles.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Even if he had seen it, the outstretching limb would have meant little to Red Hawk. His civilization was ancient, and the arboreal life of his ancesters had all but faded from the conscious memory of his race. Only in dreams did he sometimes appear to be falling, to waken just before he struck the ground. In his sight, a tree was merely a source of fuel and shade, not a beloved refuge from flashing fangs below. Og, on the other hand, had forsaken the branches but yesterday. He was the Dawn Man, and his jungle brain ruled his life. To him the bough was as a life buoy to a drowning sailor.

As his eye took it in, still ten feet ahead of him, he leaped into the air. He dropped his knife, and his great arms swung up. Both of his powerful hands clutched the bough.

Even now he did not intend to climb the tree. Some swift intelligence, beating down the clamor of his instincts, told him that the leafy branches would never save him from his foe's arrows. Instead he was simply seeking a moment's respite from the immediate peril. If he knew his motives at all, they were merely to dodge the impending shot in the only way he could—just as he had dodged a bear's charge long ago.

And the trick worked. As his body swung up, Red Hawk shot. He was not a white man, to keep cool in stress and violence. He was a chief, truly, and a strong man among his people; but his skin was dark, and dark men were never famed for steady nerves in a crisis.

The arrow whizzed under Og's swinging form like a blind serpent.

AND NOW Og finished his assault in the only way he could. There was no checking the violence which had been generated in his body. To swing back and charge again would lose him precious time and put him at a disadvantage. So as he swung forward, he simply let go his hands and went hurtling lancelike, feet forward, toward his enemy.

He struck with a thud. Both men went down, howling. They lighted in awkward positions, but even now they could not rest. The first motion that either made was toward the other. They took the most direct course, with that strange efficiency of rage. It was as if they were drawn together by some weird, magnetic force.

Now, Og had his desire. His foe was in his arms. He held him with such a fierce embrace as he might hold She-Who-Laughed, if he left this glade alive. Their battle could begin in earnest now. No longer was it an unsatisfactory, long-distance affair. No more need he squirm and dodge to avoid the demon darts, voodoo messengers of death; now he could carry the attack to his enemy. But where was his knife? Where was the god-given blade he had learned to count on? Surely he needed it now, more than ever before.

If he grasped the hilt now, he could slit his foe's body from throat to groin. But he had dropped it; the blade glittered out of reach, in the dead spruce needles behind him.

Naturally enough, he soon ceased to miss it. Perhaps it had no real place in this fight, anyway—in this primal battle for a woman's love. It was only a recent acquisition at best. His hand was used to the hilt, but his battle-tried, warrior soul knew it not. And to fight with his naked hands was an ancient heritage. It was the acme of inner fire which the chill steel would have cooled.

Flailing arms. The snicking crack of a broken rib under his knuckles. The blue face above his throat grip. The roaring, mauling, rending violence. This was self-expression beyond the uttermost of Og's mute dreams. It was the consciousness of life, of his own being and entity, such as he had never realized to the full before.

He fought alone. No gods helped him with their gifts of knives. He had only himself, the might of his own body, to rely on. And this was glory.

Would the fight be fair? Red Hawk had lost his bow, but he still bore arms. As Og sprang upon him the chief reached for his tomahawk, a short-handled, copper bladed ax that he wore in his belt. Naked hands were good, and the man-to-man fighting an exultation, but the sight of a cleft skull would be better yet. But Og seized his wrist with a wolverene's grip. Together they pulled and tugged until they broke the thongs that held the ax sheath, and the weapon fell to the ground.

Thus passed the chief's last hope of easy victory. Now he must make the most of his naked might. And surely this was worthy of Og's own.

He met Og's attack with noble courage. No longer was he panic-stricken, shaken of nerve. He, too, called up from his jungle mind an ancient lore of battle. He also remembered the glory of bare hands.

Still She-Who-Laughed did not interfere. She stood watching, leaning forward from her hips, and her indrawn, slanting

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

eyes were like narrow strips of quicksilver over her high cheek-bones. Her hands were clenched, but her arms, hanging curiously bowed, did not raise from her side. For the writhing, muscular bodies in the pine needles she knew a growing and desperate love.

Brown skins, gleaming with sweat. Muscles that rolled and moved, bunched and rippled. The thump of blows, and the gasp of tortured hearts, and the howls from open throats blaring out into the still forest. Such was the fight between Og, the Dawn Man, and Red Hawk, the chief of the tribe of the Upper Nahhane. Such was the battle that they fought for a woman's love, in the uttermost back country of the eastern Mackenzie watershed, in the land where the white man's light has not yet shone.

Only one of these twain must live. This was the law, to which the girl's wakening love now added force. She called them both, with all the yearning of her savage heart but only one might answer. And this was a greater law, older than these hills.

AND who would live, and who would die? This was still an open question. Red Hawk was proving a man of iron. He possessed not only a great strength and agility, but a trained intelligence that directed his attack. Og was the Dawn Man, fresh from the battle ground of the Wild. His hands were terrible with that terrible fighting prowess of beasts, from among whom he had lately risen. He was hard and fit from the jungle wars of five hundred thousand years.

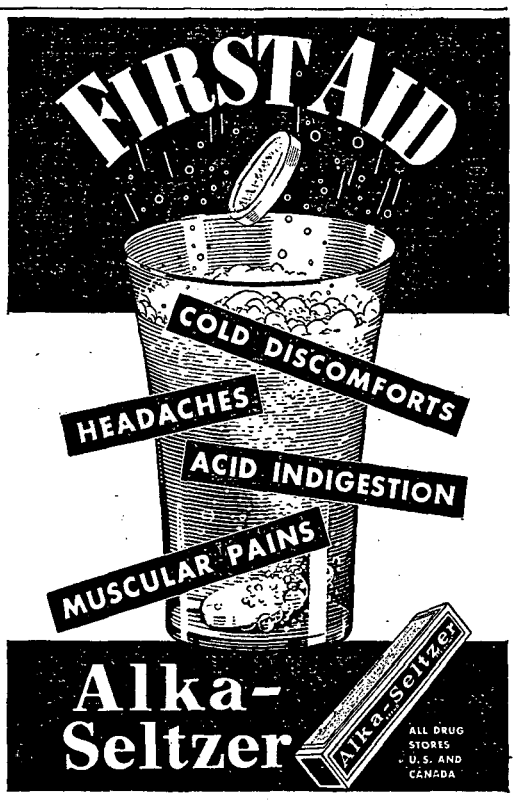
By all that was just, Red Hawk should win. He had the first claim on She-Who-Laughed. Og had invaded his tribe, had stolen one of its members. Besides, the Indian was by far the higher specimen of the two. He was the child of an ancient civilization; he played an important part in a long-established social organization; and his death would be a great loss to many people. Og, on the other hand, was little more than a brute. He was a lone hunter in the forest, and only the still trees, and the mute beasts of the woods and the wet grass that would never again record his stealing step, would note his absence if he died.

Would justice prevail? Red Hawk knew better than to count on it. He was only a pagan, but even he knew that justice is often blind, and a feeble ally to start with. However, a much stronger force fought on his side. This was natural law.

By the dictates of natural law, Og would go down. It would be a simple case of the survival of the fittest. Rarely can a beast win against a man, a savage against a savant. Compared with Ogden Rutheford, Red Hawk was a simple child of nature, but compared to Og he was a superman. He had the better brain, and, by the ancient scroll, brain must win against brawn.

But natural law is a slow force. It is likely to take centuries to exterminate an inferior species. In the meantime, there are many accidents, many set-backs. Often and often, in the ancient world, man failed to win against beast. Often his tribe waited into the night for a step that did not come, and built signal fires that were never answered. Man did not rise to dominance in one great campaign, but by a million skirmishes, in many of which he was defeated. If this were not true, man's present-day dreams would not be haunted by wild beasts; and the sight of a harmless snake or a domestic cat would not awaken a senseless terror in the throw-back's jungle-brain.

Neither right nor the laws of nature might prevail today. And they did not prevail. That great jester, Fate—who strikes



PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

aside blind Justice's groping hands and who laughs at the laws of gods and men—leaped into the breach.

As Og rolled with Red Hawk on the ground, his hand struck against a hard object. The feel of it thrilled him—he knew it of old, before he ever heard of an arrow or a knife—and his fingers closed upon it. It was victory. It was life. It was love. It was a Heaven-sent gift, a token of favor rewarding him for many meat offerings, cut from his noblest kills, at a far-off altar to the greatest of all gods.

It was the stone that he had hurled a few minutes before, and which had fallen near his enemy's ambush.

Red Hawk had forgotten its existence. If his own hand rather than Og's had blundered against it, it would have had no meaning for him. His palm was too used to the feel of finer tools to remember the paleoliths. But he would remember them now. And as Og's arm raised, the cruel stone clutched in his fingers, he saw its meaning all too plainly.

Og struck but once. Red Hawk died in the middle of his shout. As Og realized the momentous thing he had done, his own savage yell died to a mutter on his lips. The only sound left was a hoarse cry of intense emotion welling up from the dark throat of an Indian girl. But what was the nature of that emotion, and what was its dread significance, neither she nor anyone else will ever know.

CHAPTER VII

"I'VE FOUND HIM!"

WHEN Og saw that his work was done, he walked hastily to the squaw's side. He came not at all as a conqueror, but like a frightened beast seeking protection. He kept glancing back over his shoulder to a still, red figure in the dead spruce needles.

He touched the girl's arm, motioning for her to flee. But she shook her head, facing him with wide-open, adoring eyes. Grunting, she tugged him toward his victim. When he hung back she pushed on alone.

First she removed Red Hawk's moccasins and put them on her own feet. Then she collected his tomahawk, his bow, his quiver, and all the arrows she could find. Finally she despoiled him of his charm—a little carving in fossil ivory, probably meant to represent a hawk, and which he wore on a thong about his neck.

Her fierce emotion had died, and she was as calm as when she ground bear-root in a stone bowl to make Indian bread. Red Hawk was now dead, and thus any love that she might have borne him was dying, too. Since he no longer needed his moccasins and his weapons, she would take them away when she departed. They would be very useful to herself and to Og, in the hard winter days to follow.

It was for another reason that she stole his talisman. The impulse behind the theft was not thrift but fear. She believed it to be a most potent charm, given to Red Hawk by a mighty medicine man that lived beyond the ice. It was said to lend swiftness to his arrows, power to his spear. True, it had not saved him today, but perhaps some stronger charm had worked against it. In any event, she was not sure that it had lost its magical properties, and therefore it would be unwise to leave it on Red Hawk's body.

But was not Red Hawk dead? Yes, but his ghost still lived. The ghost might invoke the charm against his conqueror.

Og feared this ghost even more than she did. He did not even consider cannibalism, an idea that might otherwise have occurred to him. Rather he wanted to show the corpse all the respect he could. He felt that he would like to carry it gently away, to a far place, and put it in some lost cavern where other meat eaters could not find it. Red Hawk would appreciate this, he felt sure. It is only natural to prefer to sleep behind rock walls. And in this case, he would not be so likely to pursue Og with bad luck.

No visions came whereby he might see that this same train of reasoning was the beginning of modern burial customs. It was fear, rather than love, that made the stone-age men pay ceremonial duties to dead chiefs, and particularly to worthy foes that they had slain. Even in such advanced civilizations as that of the Indians, this fear had not been wholly forgotten. When a shaman died, his body was carried far off and concealed in the deep woods, for fear his spirit might find its way back to the tribe and work black magic. Only yesterday, in the history of the race, were unimportant people given burial honors. And even today, after the ghost fear has largely passed away, some men dare not speak ill of the dead. Often the casket of a dead chief is followed by thousands who bow their heads in apparent grief, even while they are secretly relieved that he is gone.

Og had no inclination to devour his vic-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tim. This was a most significant point. If his rung in the ladder of life had been a slightly different one, either lower or higher, he might have taken to cannibalism readily enough. If he had been merely an animal, he would have eaten his prey by right of victory in all simplicity and virtue. He would have had no moral scruples against so doing, in other words, no fear of bad luck brought on himself by offending the dead man's ghost. On the other hand, if he had belonged to one of the South Sea civilizations, he might have made the feast a ceremonial rite.

As a partly civilized man, he would have been less moral than was simple Og, the Dawn Man. He would have put by many of his primal fears; that is, he would take a chance on offending some of the lesser gods in order to glorify and advance himself. By eating the heart of his enemy he would hope to absorb the slain man's strength and other valuable qualities, in open defiance of the slain man's whimpering ghost.

Og was halfway between these two stages of human history. His only desire was to escape from the scene of killing as soon as possible. Indeed, She-Who-Laughed was far more likely to suggest the ghoulish feast than the killer himself. Happily, her civilization had outgrown cannibalism centuries before; tribal custom having tabooed the practise except in times of terrible famine.

Now she took Og by the hand and led him way. Together they hurried over a ridge and dipped down into a valley where a white stream rippled through moss. It was still here, and cool, and the grisly thicket where Red Hawk lay was lost behind the range. Og's terror began to pass off.

SHE made him lie beside the stream while she washed his wounds. Her hand was gentle and caressing; her dark eyes looked love into his. At that look, the last echo of his killing passion passed from his heart. His arms reached out and he drew her to him.

Instantly she cried out and fought to get free. She dug at him with scratching nails. Yet her struggles alone would never have freed her; his arms would have locked the tighter, like the coils of a python. Rather it was the look on her face that struck away his clutching hands and made him leap to his feet.

In her face was written fear, a superstitious error which struck straight to his own heart. It would not be for Og, the child of fear, to ignore the warning of her round eyes, her parted lips, her blanched cheeks.

He gazed quickly around him. But there was no visible danger—the water ran and the wind whispered and the trees moaned a little, one to another, the same as always. No beast had found them in their unguarded hour; none of the elemental powers had taken awful, carnate form in their sight. He tried hard to understand.

She pointed at the sky, meanwhile shaking her head. Thus she let him know that she feared the anger of the gods. These were gods that he did not know, that had not yet materialized in his brute thought; yet he would not doubt their existence. And he, too, must be careful not to anger them. The girl's face told him that they were most terrible and vengeful.

The truth was, that these were the gods of civilization. She-Who-Laughed belonged to a well-established social order, for all that it had hardly passed the stone age, and her life was ringed about with innumerable traditions and taboos. She must make a formal marriage ceremony blessed by her gods.

She took Og by the hand, and led him downstream to a holy place. Og did not understand. Yet he could not miss the meaning of the simple ritual that followed.

They had come to a meeting place of two streams. Into the larger of these, the main fork, she led her companion. When he stood fairly in the current, with the cold waters reaching almost to his thighs, she left him, showing him by gestures that he was to remain there until a later stage in the ritual. Then she removed her moccasins and herself waded into the smaller stream, a rod or so above the juncture.

Thus they took their places. The girl's face was as solemn as her white sister's, walking wreathed and veiled toward a dimly lighted chancel. And now she began to chant, in a clear, high voice. She raised her brown arms to the sky.

Og's wild heart thrilled. A dim fog filled his eyes. He did not know that this was the mist of tears, distilled by the gods into the eyes of men at times like this. He could not dream that altar candles had glimmered dimly through the same haze, impelled by the same awe, since the early-morning hours of modern history. Indeed, Og knew no history. He was a creature of instinct.

In one sense, his emotion was awe. It was solemnity inspired by ritual. Psycho-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

logically, it was a feeling of helplessness in the presence of unseen powers, whether natural or supernatural, depending on the individual's point of view. Yet no ordinary culture, but only a study of man's origin, could have told him why this awe should have wet his eyes with tears.

Why do men weep? This is only another amazing instance of how Nature takes care of her own. When for any reason the brute Dawn Man experienced a feeling of helplessness, Nature thought best to incapacitate him until he should feel himself again. For his own protection, she must keep him from fighting and hunting when his spirits were low. She could not restrain his desperate courage—he needed this quality, in his struggle for dominance—so she temporarily restricted his vision. Not until his tears were dried and his spirits had brightened could he see well enough to continue his dangerous pursuits.

Man's judgment is better today. He does not need to be stricken blind to keep out of trouble. But still the weeping mechanism remains in his body and brain, a heritage of his savage days and a reminder of his lowly beginnings. Still, man weeps when his heart is full of awe; just as Og wept when She-Who-Laughed raised her arms and chanted to her gods.

Surely, he thought, these gods that the girl talked to were the true gods. Even her voice seemed exalted as she addressed them. To him it was a more beautiful sound than the lilt of brooks, or the call of birds. She herself was a priestess, a being almost divine.

Hereafter he would worship as she did, and perhaps this gift of utterance would come to him, too. Jealous gods had deprived him of it until now. He, too, would raise his arms and make mouth sounds, wondrous to hear. Then he would be blessed, and no harm would come to him.

The girl finished her chant. She grunted at him, and beckoning, showed him that he was to start wading down the stream in which he stood. She started wading at the same time, to meet him where the two brooks joined below.

Vaguely he caught the symbolical meaning of the ceremony. She was the smaller stream, he the larger. They had run separate ways, but now they had joined together. Hereafter they ran on as one river —a union and a joining together that no man could sever.

When they stood together, in the stream below the forks, she turned and looked into his face. Again her arms lifted up, but not now in entreaty to the gods—only to him. They crept about him. They pressed him close.

His own arms encircled her. He was not brutal now; awed by the ceremony, and regarding her as a holy priestess, he was almost gentle.

Beauty dwelt in her face. It poured out to him in a moving flood. No wonder the love of woman has been the greatest force in civilizing men! A dream of beauty—strange, new, half divine, exalting him toward godhead—was born in his soul.

Her lips were smiling. Her eyes were like stars in the dark skies of August. She stood on tiptoe, the water swirling about her knees, and by an old symbol showed again their oneness, as she pressed her mouth to his.

OG AND She-Who-Laughed were wedded. The remainder of the ceremony consisted of charms to further their happiness, and symbols illustrating the marriage state. She plucked a many-seeded grass from the creek bank and threw the seeds into the air. This was a symbol of the fecundity of nature. Wherever the seeds lighted, other plants would grow. It was a charm to bless her mating. Also, it revealed the origin of the rice-throwing custom of modern weddings.

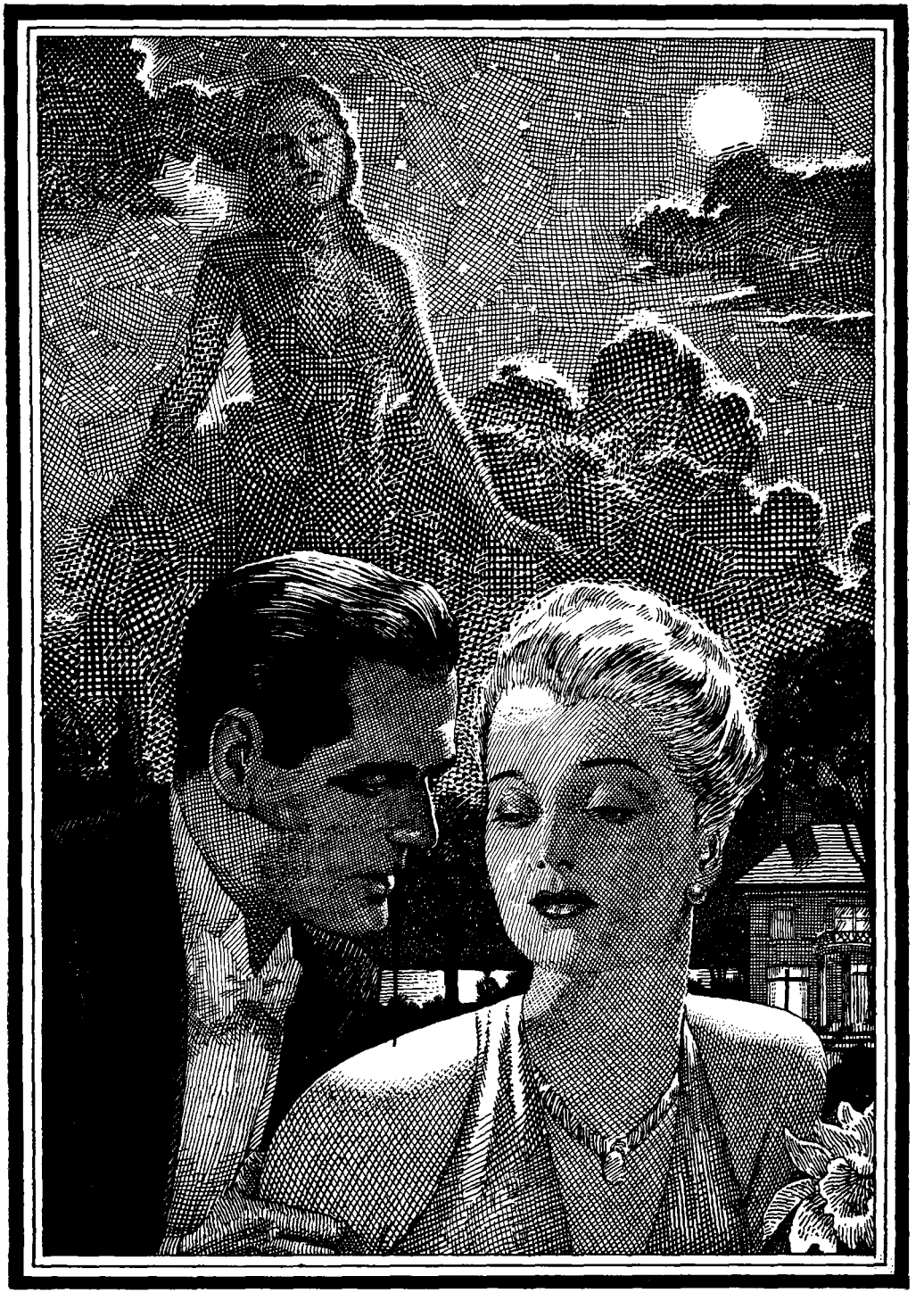
Finally she took one of the moccasins that she had removed and slipped it on Og's hard foot. Then kneeling low before him, she raised his shod foot to her shoulder. This indicated that he was not only her husband but her master—that his reign over her was supreme.

When at last they wandered on, the sun was declining behind the hills and the snow peaks were flaming. The age-old fear of the night whispered in Og's soul again. He seized the girl's wrist, grunting excitedly, meanwhile pointing toward some distant cliffs. Here they might find a cave which they could barricade against the wild hunters that would soon be creeping, fiery-eyed, from their lairs.

The girl did not understand at first. By pantomime and gestures he illustrated the stalk and attack of a wolf. When at last he made his meaning, she shook her head and laughed.

Laughing still, she took him by the hand and led him into a green hollow in a glade. Here, she told him, they would spend the night. Her mirth cheered him, but the terror-glints were still in his eyes as he gazed about him. What shelter was here? The trees were stunted spruce, with no com-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



"Wherever you go, She-Who-Laughed will be standing in the darkness—waiting for you!"

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

forting limbs to sleep in. So near were the thickets that a wolf might creep unseen into leaping range.

He tried to draw her on, but she held back, and her happy laughter rushed again to her lips. And this was potent magic in itself. A black bear that had come from upwind heard the sound, ringing and rippling between the trees, stopped in his tracks, and turned and stole back the way he had come.

The girl now began upon a ceremony scarcely less impressive than the marriage rite itself. First she took some birch bark and rubbed it between two stones. Soon it was reduced to shreds, which she rolled in a small ball. This she laid aside, while she prepared the other equipment needed in the ceremony. With the aid of the tomahawk and Og's knife she cut three pieces of wood; an arrow-like drill, a flat board of cottonwood, and a block of iron-hard alder.

With the knife she cut a notch in the flat board and started a small drill hole at the point of the notch. She passed the string of Red Hawk's bow around the cottonwood drill and put the point of the drill in the notch. Using the piece of hard wood as a pressure block at the other end of the drill, she began to work the bow back and forth.

Meanwhile she sang a song in a minor key, a song that was old among her people before they ever wandered from their homes in Asia. She herself did not know the meaning of the words; she only knew, as Og did, that they were charms of compelling power. The drill began to grind out brown wood and then black dust began to form on a chip placed under the notch.

And now the charm began to exercise its uncanny power. Wonder of wonders—a little curling cloud of smoke streamed up from the black wood dust.

Og gazed in horror-stricken silence. Only his dread of shame in the girl's eyes, a sentiment strongly fixed already in the Dawn Man, kept him from breaking into flight. At the same time an intense excitement, the beginning of a great glory, ran through his veins.

The girl put her mouth close to the smoking dust and gently spoke to it. Og could not hear what she said—he saw her lips move without audible sound—but plainly this was the most powerful charm of all. The black dust changed color. It reddened like the dawn before the storm.

Surely the wood dust was coming to life before Og's eyes. He could see its red blood shining through. When it was bright as a red star that he had sometimes seen in the summer sky, she dropped it into the ball of shredded bark.

Still she whispered to it gently. The coal thrust out a red tongue, flicking like the tongue of a serpent. And then, with a swish and a crackle, the fire god leaped up.

The hair crept on Og's head. Yet this was not all fear; it was also exultation such as his wild heart had rarely known before. Now the girl was feeding the fire god. She put on dry twigs, and later, broken pieces of dead limbs.

And now the miracle was complete. The fire god leaped and roared and crackled in the hollow. And it was a friend, not a foe! If Og did not come too close, it would not harm him, but would protect him from the dangers of the dark. No skulking beasts of the woodland would dare come near. Even Red-Mouth, the wolf, would turn from his trail and run wide of the hollow; even the grizzly, the unconquerable, would shrink from a might greater than his own.

Og wanted to shout, to dance. Only his great awe repressed him. To show his devotion to the god, he wanted to give it more food, to tear down the very forest to feed it. But the girl shook her head. She, the priestess of the fire god, alone would tend and feed the flame.

AS THE night lowered, the miracle grew. This god not only frightened away the beasts of prey, halting them with glaring eyes and raised neck bristles in the distant thickets, but triumphed over the raw powers of nature. It repelled the cold. The chill that usually invaded the forest at dusk—which Og dreaded so bitterly and which had seemed as omnipotent as death—shrank back in dread from the crackling flames, and only dared to steal up timidly and touch him on the back. More wonderful still, the fire conquered the dark.

What a victory was this! The deep night, rushing in between the trees, was not just a semblance of death, but death itself. It was cessation—oblivion—obliteration. Og feared it to the depths of his soul. Yet the fire drove it off. He could see the girl's face, three hours after sunset.

The night demons hovered close, but they dared not come in. Twenty paces back from the camp the night lay in black folds. Often and often it lunged toward the blaze. When the flame dropped low, the shadows came leaping close, like wolves at a wounded moose. But always they leaped back when the fire roared up again.

Great was the fire god! Great was She-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Who-Laughed, the priestess, whose magic had made the wood dust smoke, whose whispered speech had conjured up the flame. Great even was Og, who had carried away the priestess from her own lodge, who had outwitted her tribesmen and slain her lover! He, too, had won into the sacred circle of the fire. No longer need he hover and peer from the thickets, trembling and wide-eyed with terror; he could sit, warm and safe, in the haven of the blaze.

No more need he quake and cower when the night closed down. No more need he grow sick with dread at the sight of the blood-red leaves and the feel of the north wind. He, too, had escaped from the cruel dominance of the elements. He was one of the masters, the conquerors. He would learn to laugh, even as his mate; he would make mouth sounds more awe-inspiring that the roar of the tempest. He would shape the earth to his needs.

No more was he a beast of the forest. He was the fire-keeper, the favored of the gods.

Og could understand, now, the dim dreams that had sometimes haunted him in his cavern home. In his brute mind had lived a faint memory of fire, at times rising faintly above the darkness and horror of his more vivid, primitive dreams. The human race has possessed the flame for perhaps a hundred thousand years; and while this was only yesterday in the history of mammals, it is sufficient time to write, faintly but legibly, an imperishable record in the germ plasm. The record Og had read in his lonely nights.

The man of civilization who sits glowing before his hearth reads it anew. The room walls vanish as the centuries roll back. In their place is the green wall of the forest. The carved mantel and all its ornaments fade and disappear, leaving only a spark-flaked darkness above the trees. The andirons become a cooking rack of sticks. Civilization and all its complex problems are forgotten, and once more the Dawn Man squats before the fire god, in the beast-haunted forests of long ago.

The dark is shut out. The demons of the cold are held at bay. The wild hunters hover in distant thickets, stricken with mystery, reading their own doom in the leaping flame. They dare not come nigh. Only their eyes glare like little twin moons in the dark.

Thus was born man's love of fire. It holds him yet, enthralled, long after the beasts are driven from the city walls, and the dark and cold have lost their menace. The flame is still the glory and the power of man's dominions, not only over the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air, but over the wind, the dark, the torrents of rivers, the cloud-capped mountains, and even the gray and ancient sea.

THE two arose when morning dawned, and the love-moon set. The girl added fuel to the glowing ashes of the fire, and soon the flame-god danced anew. They breakfasted on a gopher roasted whole; cooked flesh that Og seemed to remember from some far, lost existence. At last, when they were ready to start on, the girl committed what Og thought was an act of blasphemy.

She deliberately destroyed the fire. She knocked apart the burning sticks and scattered the ashes. By gestures, she explained to Og the reason for this act. It seemed that the fire god, usually a friend, could be at times a most terrible enemy. If unrestrained, he might devour the whole forest, drive away the animals needed for game and, perhaps, in his fury, imprison them in some far glen and take their lives.

This was only one instance of She-Who-Laughed's sagacity. All day long Og was wondering at her—marveling at her great knowledge and her woodcraft. She showed him edible roots and berries he had never dared taste before. She knew how to cross deep streams by felling a small tree on the bank. She shot gophers at twenty paces with Red Hawk's arrows.

Surely she was almost a god herself. When they met a bear in the trail, and Og, wide-eyed, was already reaching for a tree limb, she advanced, shouting in defiance. The bear turned and fled.

He supposed, of course, that the girl's presence alone had saved him from the animal. That he himself might be gaining a formidable aspect to beasts he could not imagine. Yet an incident of the second day seemed to bear this out.

He had left his mate by the fire and had gone to a stream to drink. On the bank of the stream he had come face to face with a pack of seven wolves.

There was no time to seek a tree. The nearest sapling that would hold his weight was forty feet distant. To all appearances he was trapped at last, and his life must end in those long, white fangs in the first moon of his glory.

Everything was against him, beast and forest and earth had conspired together that he might die. Even the wind blew from him toward the animals, so that they

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

could get his scent plainly and identify him as the helpless Dawn Man who had evaded them so long. This last point, in Og's mind, was particularly tragic, because sometimes when he had met the wolves upwind—when they could not catch his scent—they had been appalled by his tall form and had given him time to fly. Now he must die fighting, like the god-woman's consort that he was.

No use to call to She-Who-Laughed. The girl could not possibly reach him in time. The yell that rushed to his lips was more of a warning than an appeal for help. His knife made little lightnings in the air.

And then a miracle fell. The wolves stopped dead still, their hackles rising. And instead of lunging to the attack, their long bodies ripping the air as spawning salmon rip water, they turned and fled in the most abject terror.

At first Og could not believe his eyes. At last, however, the truth sank home. He also carried the scent of the fire-maker. The wood smoke was in his beard and on his skin. No more was he a hunted thing of the coverts, but the forest monarch, almost the forest god. From now on the beasts must leap in terror from his trail.

Og had come into his kingdom. He had found that security which leads straight to culture and civilization. Also he had found a satisfaction and enjoyment in life of which the terror-haunted brute-man could not dream.

He took the girl to his old cavern, and here they prepared to spend the winter. And they must work swiftly; only a few weeks of the red fall remained.

First they must have warm clothes. Into the highlands they ventured in search of caribou. The pelts of these animals were almost cold-proof—the hair was one of the most perfect heat-insulators known to that great fabric-maker, Mother Nature. She-Who-Laughed desired them for making parkas. Long and tireless was the hunt that the two made, up over timber line and into the yellowing parks.

Hour after hour they stalked through the high meadows. Arrow after arrow sank harmlessly from the girl's bow, or else administered a flesh wound in a stag's side. Yet the shafts were copper-tipped, the copper hardened by some lost art, and when they plunged deep, they were deadly enough. Finally the hunters procured six pelts, sufficient for their winter wardrobe.

Then there were long hours of clothes-making before the fire. The pelts were fleshed and cured, then softened by endless chewing. At last they were cut and sewn with sinew and leather thongs.

Meanwhile they worked to improve the cave. Fortunately, it was dry, to start with, and She-Who-Laughed knew how to warm its cold walls with brush, grass, and turf. Indeed, the cavern walls and floor were covered by dry blocks of turf.

They might have fared ill, that winter, except for a windfall in the last days of autumn. A clatter and a bawling in the woods at dawn had called them from sleep to find two huge moose battling with interlocked horns. Both animals were slain with arrows, and their big pelts were a precious adjunct to the lair. In addition, Og killed another young moose with a deadfall, and the squaw shot a black bear out of a tree.

A fire wall was built up to reflect the heat into the cave. The last of the salmon schools were caught and allowed to freeze. The girl made snares of thong to catch arctic hares and such birds as would winter in the white deserts of the Yukon.

ONE night the fall died. The storm king cracked his whips of blizzard and hail and sleet. The two exiles shivered in their beds and wakened to a wan, white world.

Quickly winter seized the land in a grasp of iron. The rivers froze almost to the gravel of their beds. The trees bowed with snow, and no more the wind swayed their weighted limbs. A lovely sheet of snow, smooth except for low mounds and an occasional long, wind-scooped hollow, covered hill and valley. The cold deepened until Og thought that the very pulse of the earth had ceased to flow.

There were days when they could not go abroad. A fierce fire, beating into the cave, scarcely softened the savage lash of the cold. There were days when sun and sky, mountain and valley, were lost and obliterated in the swirling fury of blizzards. There were nights when an icicle moon rode through the frozen sea of the sky, and the stars were hungry eyes of demon wolves. There were nights when the devil-fires were ignited in the heavens, and the sky itself fluttered with banners of flame.

With great toil, the squaw made snow-shoes of cedar and caribou thongs. Without them she and her mate could not hope to survive. They would have died of famine in their cave, like improvident ground squirrels that fail to put by a sufficient winter store. When the shoes were completed the two skimmed the drifts like strange snow-spirits, wandering in the white and silent solitudes.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Life was hard enough though they did the best they could. The moose had yarded in far places, and the hunters could not find them. Only occasionally did they encounter a caribou, leaping through the deep drifts. The gophers, on which they had learned to rely, were all underground; the waterfowl had all departed for some blessed land far to the south.

Many of the animals had protective coloration that hid them from sight. The ptarmigan vanished utterly against the white drifts, and when the snow-shoe hare leaped through the glades, they could see only his dark shadow, skimming along with nobody behind it. No wonder their eyes widened, and strange, dark superstitions took root in their souls.

Only occasionally did these hares fall to their arrows. Ptarmigan were still rarer trophies, and even the porcupines hung out of sight in the snowy trees. This scant game, and an occasional ermine or marten caught in the squaw's snares, furnished the bulk of their winter food.

These were the hunger days. This was the famine time of which the wolves had chanted on the hills. And now the wolf song was even stranger, wilder, more poignant than ever before. The season was one of mystery and terror. Evil spirits were abroad in the silent woods. Often Og saw them move and creep, glimpsing them vaguely out of the corner of his eye, but when he turned to stare, they were gone.

Northern lights, and shadows, and voices in the woodland! Whispering in the night that made the two huddle in each other's arms! Terror and solitude and death!

Yet, in spite of all these fears and all these hardships, Og was happier than he had ever hoped to be. High among his blessings was the haven of the hearth. No wild beasts dared menace him now. When he walked abroad, the hunters knew that he was the favored of the fire god, and they ran in panic from his trail. When he sat by the blaze at night, and the little blue moons showed two by two at the edge of the dark, he did not cower, but only snarled and shouted in defiance—and then the little moons waned and disappeared. At the tired day's end he would rejoice to see the flame spears crackling and striking at the dark. He thrilled at their victory over the numbing, killing cold.

An even greater happiness was his mate, the daughter of the tribe of the Upper Nahhane. Why, she was life itself. Without her, he could not have even hoped to survive the merciless winter. She had given him fire; and one by one she gave him all the other blessings of the god-men. No more did he kill his game with stones. Instead, he too carried a devil-bow, and he chased the great beasts on the run with his singing darts! He wore wings on his feet that bore him over the tree-deep drifts, and he did not sink almost out of sight like the wandering caribou. As the winter wore on, she even taught him speech.

He learned that certain sounds meant certain things. Gradually he learned to recognize these sounds, and even to imitate them. Surely this was the greatest triumph of all! No more was he the mute Dawn Man, brother of the moose and the bear, but one of the talking people, only a step below a god!

Surely She-Who-Laughed was a prodigy of nature! His admiration for her grew with every hour. She knew a thousand tricks of woodcraft. Her wondrous hands could not only sew clothes and lay fires, but set traps, make hooks of bone for catching fish through the ice, construct handy appliances for the cave, and launch an arrow straight as a falcon's flight. Meanwhile she told him breath-taking stories of her tribe; of long-ago wars, of floods and fires, of year-long journeys. She described great waters, and far-off peoples, and undreamed-of wonders. She taught him charms to bring good luck, and explained the intricate system of taboos practised by her tribe, and introduced him to new demons, devils, and gods, the like of which he had not yet conceived. Sometimes she sang to him—wild, strange songs that swelled almost to bursting his wild, strange heart.

His love for her deepened like the snow. It was greater than his love of warmth and food, of killing and conquest, even of life itself. In her eyes he saw what bore him up like wings. Perhaps it was godhead, he did not know; perhaps it was the promise of immortality. He adored the fire's glow on her dusky face.

The squaw returned this love with all the ardor of the savage. To her, he was a great tawny wood-god whom she could adore even though she could not understand. She wondered at his deficiencies in the simple culture of her people; but his great strength, and even his brutality and savagery wakened in her a primitive devotion. True he was far below her, according to standards of practical accomplishment. She had to teach him the simplest things.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Yet she could not master him, and indeed, in spite of his worshiping admiration for her gifts, he mastered her. She seemed to feel that in some way, in a manner beyond her ken, he was her superior. Perhaps she noticed his even features, the high-bred countenance of the white man. Perhaps she was awed by the whiteness of his skin, now that winter skies were bleaching his deep tan.

CHAPTER VIII

BLACK FEAR

ONLY ONCE during these winter months did they get track of human beings. On this occasin they had chased a wounded caribou into a far valley. As they topped a white ridge, the squaw cried out and pointed. Moving north on the slope, a team of Malemutes showed black against the snow.

Og was frightened at first. Any visitors to these solitudes seemed to promise danger. But as the sled drew near, his fear yielded to curiosity, and perhaps a vague desire to see and talk with this stranger, and commune with him as one man with another. She-Who-Laughed could protect him against any unlooked-for peril. Besides, he could see now that the visitor was one of the dark-skinned fold, the like of which he had seen in the village of the Upper Nahhane, and which he had slain in a far hollow beyond the ridges.

The stranger drew up within one hundred yards and halted his team. By the beadwork of his parka, the girl recognized him as a native of one of the Teslin tribes, far to the west. He stared a long time, leaning forward from his hips in the Indian posture, then signaled for Og to approach nearer.

The Dawn Man at once turned to his mate. She would tell him what to do; her sharp eyes would perceive any hidden danger, and warn him. But she nodded and gestured for him to walk forward. It was hardly perceptible that her eyes peered darkly between their long slits, and that she slipped her bow forward in her arms.

She made no move to accompany Og. In the first place, she was a squaw; and the women of the Mackenzie peoples do not sit in council with the braves. When hunter meets with hunter on the trail, it is not meant that the child-bearing drudge should stand nigh and listen to their talk. She-Who-Laughed would not insult her lord before a visitor. Besides, from a distance she could keep a much better watch.

Og walked near, his heart racing. The Indian grunted a salutation—a greeting of friendship which, freely translated, means, "Brother at the killing," and held out his open hand.

Og could not understand the words. He caught none of the guttural sounds with which his mate had acquainted him. The truth was that this stranger from the Teslin country talked quite a different dialect from the people of the Nahhane, and only an expert linguist like She-Who-Laughed —whose red mouth was quick at sounds— could bridge the gap. Og did, however, perceive the meaning of the outstretched hand.

The stranger was showing him that his hand held no weapon. Og immediately stretched out his own hand. Thus they approached each other to make talk.

Still Og was on guard. He was afraid that the stranger's hand would whip to his waist and seize the long knife that he wore there. So when he came in reach, he took an entirely natural way to guard against such treachery.

He clasped the stranger's hand. At the same instant, this hand clasped his own. Evidently the stranger was also fearful of treachery. So they stood with hands interlocked.

Og was aware of a most curious sensation. Somehow, he liked this pressing of palms. It made him feel friendly, generous, sociable. At the same time he was troubled by confused memories. As had happened several times before, he seemed to recall some other existence, far away and long ago.

The truth was that Og was again reaching back to Ogden Rutheford. A gleam of light had crept through the black gate of his amnesia. This hand-clasping had proved a powerful stimulus to the higher association-areas of his brain. No wonder, this was a custom of civilization. It was simply the daily greeting of the white men, reduced to its simplest elements. The men of the cities no longer wore knives and tomahawks in their belts, but the extending of empty, unweaponed hands and the clasping of fingers to prevent treachery still survived as the common handshake, a world-wide symbol of friendship.

Og uttered the first words that sprang to his lips. "Eat my meat!" he said, in the tongue he had learned from his mate.

The stranger seemed to understand, though with considerable difficulty. He made Og repeat the sentence two or three

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

times. Then he began a long discourse, accompanied by many gestures, and many pointings back over his shoulder that Og could not understand at all.

The Dawn Man shook his head in bewilderment. Yet his curiosity was aroused by the man's earnest manner, and the thought came that perhaps She-Who-Laughed, the great and clever one, might interpret the stranger's talk. So he called her up, and the two conversed.

Og could not understand them at all. Indeed, they had difficulty in following each other. They used many gestures, and certain conventional signs with the hands and arms that Og had never seen before. He did not know that this was Indian sign-language, a kind of mute Esperanto that is known to most all aboriginal Americans, and which would no doubt bridge a gap of silence between a Florida Seminole and an Alaskan Aleut. Og could not even understand all of his squaw's questions, she talked so rapidly and with such queer accents and intonations.

Yet the conversation was not without meaning for him. Part of it, at least, he could grasp—that part which was reflected in the squaw's face. He had learned to read this countenance. The lights in her black eyes were like heliographs; the blood that came and went in her cheek was a signal fire. Watching her, he knew that the stranger had brought bad news. All was not well behind the ridges from whence his trail led.

There was a look of anguish about the girl's mouth. Her narrow eyes had widened to full width. Yet this was not mere physical terror. It was like a blow in the breast, a stab near the heart. It was a deep dread of some threat that the future held for her. There was a grim meaning in the reaching back of her hand to grasp her mate's, so tightly that pain trickled through his fingers.

PRESENTLY Og caught one of the stranger's questions. He was asking the location of Og's cave; the pantomime of bed and fire was plain enough. As Og started to answer the question, by gesture, the girl silenced him with her sharp nails in his palm. Then she pointed away, in a direction exactly opposite from the home cave.

A moment later, the Indian drove on. The girl watched him with strangely indrawn eyes. The lines of her face seemed to deepen and grow hard, and Og saw a look of desperate resolve, perhaps of cruelty, flash across her lips.

For an instant he stared in bewilderment. Suddenly he saw what her hands were doing. She had drawn an arrow from her quiver and was now fitting it to the bow.

He seized her arm just in time. An instant later, and the stranger would not have gone on. He would have bedded quietly in the snow, with eight inches of arrow-wood protruding from his back. His long trek would have been over, and a squaw of a distant village would have wept and watched in vain the western sky-line.

"Let me go!" the girl whispered tensely. She tried to wrench loose from Og's iron grasp.

"No. I don't want him killed. We are not wolves!"

"But he will talk. They will give him firewater, and he will tell them where to come. It is our only chance."

But Og did not understand. Besides, he felt kindly toward the stranger. He still glowed with warmth from the clasp of a friendly hand. No blood lust came rushing red to his fierce eyes. This meeting with a fellowman in the solitude and the silence had pleased him, and awakened his social instincts.

The traveler continued on unharmed. Finally the squaw put back her arrow and stood motionless, saying no word. Then she signaled to Og to follow and started plodding across the valley in the direction she had pointed.

Og obeyed in bewilderment. The squaw was not starting home; neither was she following the trail of the wounded caribou. She led him up into the timber beyond, and here she paused again. Hidden herself, but with peering eyes, she watched the dimming speck of black that was the dog team.

Only after it had disappeared beyond the horizon did she start back. Even now she took a circuitous route, as far as possible following the glare ice of a stream that recorded no tracks. Then, and not till then, did Og perceive a gleam of the truth. She was concealing their trail, just as the cow moose concealed her trail from the wolf pack.

When the fire was built high, and the evening meal consumed, she began to question Og. She talked in the Indian tongue as far as she could make him understand; to fill the gaps she used sign language and pantomime. "Og, do you know white men?" she asked.

Og shook his head. "Men—with skins like this?" He lifted a handful of snow.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Yes. Men of white skins come from afar. They come in ships, up the Mother Waters (the Mackenzie), and up the Sleep River of the West (the Yukon). They kill their meat with fire-sticks."

Og looked troubled. A baffling memory haunted him. But he could not seize it, and at last he shook his head.

The fear in her eyes dimmed for a moment, but at once flashed up again. "Og, where did you come from ?" she asked in a low voice.

He pointed toward the south. "By a mountain with two peaks, and a long lake under a red cliff."

"But before that, where did you come from—in the beginning?"

Still he pointed to the south. Plainly the answer distressed her. It was toward the south—not the north of storms and lashing winds—that she looked with such dread. "I don't know," he told her at last. "I—cannot remember."

"Are you a white man, Og?"

He looked at his tawny arms and smiled. "I am your mate. We are of the same blood."

But she shook her head. "You were white man once," she told him. "I cannot tell how I know—I have never seen a white man. But I know, and there is no mistake. I have listened in the medicine lodge and I will not turn from the truth again.

"You are a white man, Og, but how you came here, and what charm was put upon you, I cannot guess. You are not like other white men. You have not the fire-stick, and you are not mightier than a mountain stream, and you do not carry little naked twigs, with the smell of skunk on the tip, for striking fire. These are the things that mark the people of the snowy skins, because Wolf Jaw, my mother's uncle who went once to the Mother Waters, told me so." She gestured helplessly. "I cannot understand!"

He took her hand, and slipped it under his parka next to his heart. "Where is the meat?" he asked (meaning "What does it matter?") "What does She-Who-Laughed care what land I came from, or what trail I took? I have grown to be like you, my night-bird that sings in the cavern! I have learned your talk and your ways. We will go now, and sleep."

"Did you come in a canoe, Og?"

"No, I do not know—canoe." This was a word which she had not yet taught him.

"Did you come over water?" she persisted.

"I crossed a river on a fallen tree. Another river I crossed in the shallows, where salmon lay. A third river I followed—till I found She-Who-Laughed. But I did not cross that river."

"I do not mean rivers. I mean a great water that even a wild goose may hardly fly across. Across that water the white men came—I have heard tales. And now—and now they have come again."

The awe in her tones made his heart leap. "What game do they hunt?" he asked breathlessly.

"What game? Can't you guess, Og? They do not hunt the moose, to put the horns in their great igloos; and they do not hunt the white sheep on the slide rock; and they do not hunt even the grizzly bear, which it is said the white men will travel a moon's journey to kill and to take home to show to his tribesmen. It is none of these things that bring twenty white men across the great water and down the Sleepy Waters of the West."

"Perhaps they come to hunt the yellow pebbles that lie in the creek beds," Og suggested.

This seemed an intelligent guess. What was more likely than that the hordes of white men who had swarmed over the southern passes thirty years before had come again? She-Who-Laughed had told him about these people. Tales of them had carried clear to the Mackenzie valley, had become woven into the folk-lore of the tribes. Fortunately, none of them had ever reached the tribe of the Upper Nahhane; and so the skins of the younger generation was not tinged with yellow, nor were children born with sky-blue eyes and hair the color of dead grass. The gold seekers had mostly gone the way they had come, and the squaw knew them only as vague, incredible figures, discussed to weary length by the old men.

"These are not pebble-hunters, who come now," the girl answered. "These are not the crazy people who came bearing burdens on moose without horns, and who went away before I was born. Some of them are Chechaquoes, surely, but with them are great white chiefs who have seen the ice break up for twenty years. And they are not digging in the creeks, but have journeyed down the Sleepy Waters and up the River of the North, to the place where the great canoe comes to buy furs from the tribesmen. They wait there for the ice to break, so they may come here."

The place that the squaw referred to was no doubt the trading post at Pelley Banks, the last outpost between the Yukon

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and the Mackenzie. The big canoe was a river boat that came all the way from White Horse. Pelley Banks would be the natural outfitting point for a large party wishing to penetrate the remote Pelley Range.

"Then what is it that the white men hunt?" Og asked tensely.

The squaw looked at him with strangely glowing eyes. "They are hunting you, my husband," she told him solemnly. "They have come to take you away from me."

Og froze in his place. His face slowly darkened. "They cannot make me go!" he whispered at last. "We will be together always. When they come, I will kill them all!"

"There are too many to kill," she told him. "But you say truth, Og. We will be together always." She paused and smiled.

"Even if they shoot me with their fire-sticks, and leave my body in the young grass, still we shall not part," she went on at last. "My shadow-self will go with you yet, even across the Great Water to the Sun lands in the south."

ANOTHER month remained of winter. During this month, the two exiles dwelt on in their cave, wresting life from the snowy death about them. Still they chased caribou in far, hushed valleys; still the fire-god leaped and danced at the cave mouth. Still they listened to the moon-song of the wolves, chanting of hunger, of fear, of the ancient persecution by the elements.

Rarely did they mention the threat of the coming spring. They were fatalists, these twain, and they knew what must come, would come. Both tried to make the most of the winter days remaining, their last weeks of security within the fortress of the snows. Joyously they shared their hunting triumphs, their simple food, their glowing hours at the cave mouth at dusk. Yet the girl wept, at times, even when there was no acrid wood-smoke to explain her tears.

For them there was no glory in the dawning spring. They did not share in the joyous wakening that throbbed through the Wild like wings. The days lengthened, the sun grew ardent, the snow was stripping from the mountains with many a booming avalanche; but still they prayed for the reign of the old White King, and still they looked up with brightening eyes when his cold breath stilled waterways once more.

But the White King's powers were failing. The counter attacks of his cohorts were ever less formidable. The bears wakened in their dens, and idled on the slopes in the green track of the new slides. The vanguard of the bird armies arrived from the south. The salmon were swirling and moiling at the mouths of the rivers.

The weeks flew by. The nights were only a shadow, swiftly flashing across the face of the day. In this brief dusk, Og began to experience strange dreams. He would narrate them to She-Who-Laughed as the two squatted before the breakfast

ON THE NEWSSTANDS

MINOS OF SARDANES

By Charles B. Stilson

Strange was the call that summoned him across the frozen wastes to unknown Sardanes, and stranger still his mission. . . . For only he, of all the world, knew the secret that would save that gem of Paradise lying hidden beyond the Southern Pole—and he must stake his life for Sardanes and the Rose maiden. . . .

Don't miss this wonderful story by the author of "Polaris—of the Snows." The November issue is on all newsstands now!

Also, "The Living Portrait" by Tod Robbins, "The Elf-Trap" by Francis Stevens, and "The White Gorilla" by Elmer Brown Mason!

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

fire, and asked her to explain their meaning. His own theory was that his shadow-self went wandering when he slept, beholding many wonders that were hidden from his mortal eyes. He could not understand why the girl's face would draw with fear, or why she should try to direct their talk into other channels.

One night he went to bed with a stabbing ache in the top of his head. Since his conduct had been exemplary, he did not think that this was any ordinary affliction by the gods. He decided that it was a knocking from within—the frenzied efforts of his shadow-self to break loose from its bony prison and go wandering again. And indeed, his dreams that night seemed to bear out this theory. When he wakened in the morning his headache was gone, but he had a tale to tell that opened the girl's eyes.

"My shadow-self got free as soon as I went to sleep," he said in the Indian tongue. "He flew far, like a wild goose, and crossed a great water in a great canoe."

"A canoe—as long as a tree?" the girl asked fearfully. "As high as a young spruce?"

These were the dimensions of the river boat that came up the Pelley, and which She-Who-Laughed thought was the biggest craft in the world. But Og made a broad gesture. "As long as four tall trees!" he told her. "As high as a cliff. When it spoke, its voice carried like thunder. On such a canoe my shadow-self traveled, to a land far away."

"In what direction, Og?" the girl asked.

"Toward the south, I think. Laughing One, surely this land I came to is the land of the gods. The men have no hair on their faces, and wear many skins. The women, whom you have told me must go covered, even in winter wear most short and scanty skins. They ride about in great sledges, but the sledges have no dogs."

"Perhaps they drive mooselike beasts, as my uncle, Wolf Jaw, told of the pebble hunters."

"No. The sledges go of themselves. They go three times as fast as the fastest dogs you have told me of, even when the dogs run on firm crust. They go twice as fast as a running caribou."

"That cannot be!" the girl interjected.

"But it is so. Listen to other wonders. You know how the wild geese talk to one another across the sea? How one goes south, to find new feeding waters, and calls his mates silently through the air, and they go south and follow him? These people can do likewise. They may talk to one another across a mountain, even across a great water like my shadow-self rode on in the big canoe."

"That cannot be," the girl interrupted again.

"It is so. They are a mighty people. And they are a cunning people, too. They are even more cunning than the animals we know. She-Who-Laughed, you know how the weasel turns white in winter, so that he cannot be seen against the snow—so he may steal up to a rabbit and the rabbit cannot see him come? These people I tell of have learned the weasel's tricks. When they drive their mighty fire-sticks and their dogless sledges into battle, they put paint on them, like the war-paint of your tribe, so that they become the same color as the bushes and therefore cannot be seen."

"THIS is most cunning," the girl commented.

"It is only the beginning of their cunning. You know, my mate, the tale you told me of the little brown men of the North, the Eskimo, you called them. You told how they get their meat with spears and nets out of the sea. Sometimes, you said, they catch a long, thin fish that carries a most evil charm. When they touch this fish, you say, they are straightway knocked down as if by a blow from an unseen club, and they prick and tingle with great pain."

"That is true," the girl told him solemnly. "The old men who have traveled to the North Seas say so. The pain is the same as when the lightning comes close by, in a rainstorm. It is, indeed, a most potent charm."

And this was true. Certainly the electric eel of the north, tales of which had carried to the Nahhane people, had a magic all his own!

"This very charm is possessed by the people my shadow-self visited while I slept," Og told her in an awed voice. When they wish to kill one of their number, they have him sit in a chair into which the charm is passed. They make the charm, and he straightway dies. When they go forth to battle they put up long strings, like fishnets, only made of metal, and into these metal strings they pass the charm. Then when their enemy touches the strings, he is straightway knocked down, and sometimes he dies, too."

"They must be a most crafty people to

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

have learned such cunning from the fish," the squaw commented.

"This is not all they learned. You told me of another fish that the Eskimos sometimes catch. He is a demon-fish, you said, most ugly to look at, and he has long arms that grip and squeeze. When this demon-fish is chased by an enemy, he pours out what looks like blackberry juice into the water, and then he cannot be seen and devoured. This is what you told me, Laughing One."

"It is true. The old men say so."

"These people my soul visited have learned this trick, also, from the demon-fish. When they go abroad in their big war-canoes, and they see a bigger war-canoe coming to kill them, they throw into the air a great black cloud of smoke that hides them, just as the berry juice in the water hides the fish."

"Such people must be gods, not men."

"Gods they must be. Yet they learn their tricks from the Wild. One more trick they have learned, the most cunning of all. Laughing One, you know Big-Smell-on-Four-Legs?"

Laughing One was now true to her name. "The impudent one that walks in the middle of the trail, bidding even the wolf get out of his way?" she answered. "The bold, handsome one, with the fine tail and the stripe down his back? Who does not know him! Seekak, we call him, though he is not common so far north."

"I have seen him thrice," Og told her. "On one of those three times I tried to kill, but I will not try again. My shadow-self could not bear to stay with me in the cave, for days and weeks. It is a strong weapon that Seekak carried, and so these people I tell you of have learned to use it, too. When they go into battle they shoot this strong smell at their enemies. When their enemies breathe it, they run and hide their faces and they weep and sometimes they die. It is a powerful charm."

Og now felt silent.

"Is that all the dream?" the girl asked.

"That is all that I can remember. She-Who-Laughed, I wish that you and I knew some of those god-men's charms. Then we would not be afraid when we see a moving speck on the hills. My mate would not then wake in her sleep in terror, and seize me so tight that her nails bring blood to my skin."

But the triumphs of civilization were not for them. The only charms they knew were such as dwelt in the blades of their tomahawk and knife, and in the little ivory figure that the squaw wore at her throat. Still they must watch the sky-line with shivering dread. Still the squaw's dreams were troubled by white hands that reached over the sea to tear her husband from her arms.

June came, green and fragrant. And then, at June's tranquil passing, the blow fell.

One dawn a small herd of caribou crashed by the cave in wild stampede. No wolf had frightened them; only the smell of man could have struck such terror in their brute souls. The squaw's eyes narrowed. Quickly she climbed to a near-by ridge and looked back over the animals' trail.

She did not look in vain. Against the northern hills was a faint, blue cloud. And this cloud augured a storm of terror and woe such as had never smote the cavern home before.

It was smoke from a new camp. Nor was it low and thin like an Indian smoke. Only the brave, full-fed fires of the white man made a billowing pall like this.

SHE crept up the ridge until she could peer over the summit. Lying flat, she saw not one fire, but four. There were half a dozen tents and at least three score of big black animals such as she had never seen before. They looked like moose, but she knew that Great-Horns does not feed in the camps of white men. She was used to packing dogs for summer trips, so she decided that these were pack-animals of a new and superior kind.

This was the base camp of a large search party. The trail was hot, and their long search all but over.

The squaw stole back like a wolf to the cave. She met Og in the doorway, and her face told him all that he needed to know. He picked up the tomahawk and his knife; the squaw seized the bow and quiver. Without a sound, without a tear for the lair they loved so well, without a moment's futile waiting and deliberation, they started away over the southern hills.

No use of hiding in their cavern, trusting that the searchers might miss its half-hidden entrance! Thus they might outwit the Chechaquoes from afar—the pebble-hunters and the palefaces—but never the grizzled guides who led the party. These had seen the ice go since the days of the Great Trek, so wandering Mackenzie Indians had reported, and they could find a camp like a hungry jay. They would see old wood-cuttings; they would follow dim

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

trails. The fugitives' only hope was instant flight into the virgin fastnesses of the Simpson Mountains.

They carried only the bare necessities of life. Even their bed-robes were forsaken in the cave. They took off through the timber, and they never crossed a stream until thick woods screened their retreat.

Yet in spite of their black fear, they did not run. The race was not to the swift, they thought, but to the strong and enduring. They were not caribou, to be stampeded into panic, but fire-people, cunning and cautious. They moved at a swift walk that sent the long miles racing behind.

Could the pursuers follow such a pace? The squaw dared to hope otherwise. She knew that they were heavily burdened, and that ordinarily a big outfit means slow travel. It was true that they packed their goods on big moose-like beasts instead of on the backs of dogs; but surely they could go no faster than their white masters could walk. But in reasoning thus she forgot that the white men were all miracle-workers. She had even forgotten some of the tales she had heard of the Great Trek, thirty years before, when Moose-Without-Horns was used for another purpose than of packing duffel.

Her greatest hope seemed to be that she and Og had got away unseen. By the time their lair was discovered they would have a long head-start. Already they were almost out of eye-range of the enemy camp. No more need they be so careful in screening their retreat. They could hurry boldly through the forest, in search of some far hiding place behind the ranges.

When they had gone six miles, they were confronted by a bare ridge. It was naked as a bone, and its every stone took the sun like bear's fur. Would they climb boldly up its sunlit slope? Otherwise they must spend two hours of their precious time encircling it.

But why should they go to such weary lengths? What human eye, whether gray-blue like the white man's or black like the Indian's, could see so far? At a distance of six miles, even a mountain sheep would graze unwarned. Even the wild goose, that turns in her flight when a grass blade moves on the ground, would be blind as a mole. Even the buzzard—the hateful one who floated from afar on summer days, whose flickering shadow was doom, and who kept a mile-high watch on every new born cub so that he might be near it when it died—even he would soar through his blue depths unheeding.

The two started up the ridge. The June sun beat upon them, warming them and cheering their heavy hearts. They could not dream that its rays were beating back, eight miles across empty space, into certain finely ground crystal rings. Alas, they knew little of the white man's ways! The magic that he made was a thousand times greater than they had ever dared dream. Even those half-believed tales, told on summer nights beside far tribal fires, fell short of the truth. Even Old Wolf Jaw, Marco Polo of the Nahhane tribe, had underrated the facts.

True, the white man's naked eye could not locate them at eight miles' distance. It is keener than an Indian's, its blue-gray iris admits the maximum of light; but for spying out the vast spaces of the north it needs spectacles. And these his monstrous work-shops had supplied. They were of crystal and metal, and could see farther than the buzzard, the mountain ram, and the wild goose combined. They could bridge space like the eye of the sun itself.

On the ridges about their base camp, five white men stood watch. They all carried binoculars; with these they searched the park lands and the distant hills. And presently one of them picked up what might be two bears, advancing slowly up a naked slope eight miles away.

He dropped down prone on the shale. Carefully he focused his glasses; then he peered a long time. Finally he signaled to one of his companions.

"I've found him," he announced quietly. And he showed his friend how to level the glass.

The latter also took time for a long scrutiny. "I guess you're right," he agreed at last. "Of course it might be two Indians far from home, but somehow I don't think so. The big one is no doubt Rutheford, crazy as a fool-hen. I guess that wandering Teslin native that the mounted policeman talked to, knew his business after all. And that means a fat job is going to be cut short."

For a moment more they studied the lay of the land. Then they walked quickly back and collected the outfit.

CHAPTER IX

THE WHITE MAN'S POWER

BY NOON the fugitives had reached the plateau country to the southeast. Here were naked wastes, and heaped up crags; and here the whistling marmot

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sounded his eerie call. But the desolation found no echo in their hearts. Their faces were flushed, their eyes luminous; and often the girl laughed, a sound that rang strangely in the abysmal stillness. They dared to believe that they had left their pursuers far behind. Later they would cross the range, conceal their tracks like foxes, and take up their abode in some far, lost valley where the white man does not go.

When they stood on the bleak summit of the hill, the girl glanced triumphantly behind. No fear was on her face, no dreadful expectancy in her gaze. Even when she saw a dark moving figure, half a mile below, she did not flinch. Of course it was only some beast of the forest, a moose, perhaps, or a bull caribou wandering alone.

She peered closer. Yes, it was an animal, not a man. No need for her heart to leap so fiercely! It was moving swiftly toward them, but she could see that it had four legs, and was five times human size. Then why did her pupils dilate? What of the cold wind that seemed to strike her from the heights?

This animal stood half again as tall as the tallest moose she had ever seen. Was the tower that she saw on its back merely its antlers? But what beast that she knew carried such horns so early in the year?

Presently the animal turned sideways in the trail. She saw its vivid silhouette against the gray background. And then she knew the bitter truth. Again she had figured the white man wrong. She had dreamed that in pursuing her, he must walk tediously on the ground, like herself. Not this paleface from afar! He had trained his animal slaves in service other than as beasts of burden. He had borrowed the fleetness of their limbs!

Not slow, frail feet but iron-shod hoofs had sped him over the trails. Instead of climbing laboriously over the fallen logs, as she and her mate had done, the white man had soared over them by the flexing of mighty thighs. Instead of racking his own heart on the cruel steeps he had been upheld and borne on by the tireless heart of a giant.

The white man was a god! The old men of her tribe had told less than the truth. Already he had conquered earth and sea, and now he was breaking down the ancient barriers of the Wild. Distance, to him, was a cobweb across his trail.

It is possible that a man on horseback is the most splendid creature the world has ever seen. Primarily, it is far more of an innovation than a man in an airplane. Human beings are not the first heavy-bodied creatures to develop wings. The great condor lifts himself aloft; once the pterodactyl skimmed over the steaming fens of the ancient world. They gained their mastery of the air through the evolution of their bodies; man gained his by the swift growth of his mind.

On the other hand, man is the only large animal that ever put a slave-ring on his physical superiors. The sight of him riding erect, guiding with his hand a great steed six times his weight, recalls in an instant the glorious history of his race. Horsemanship is the very symbol of man's godhead, of his triumph over the beasts of the field and the forces of nature. And it stirs the pulses with a thousand thrilling memories: of great migrations, of holy crusades, of hard-won battles, of magnificent adventures.

But the sight was far from splendid to this girl on the hill. It would have been fearful enough, even had the horseman come in peace. She belonged to a non-equestrian tribe. If her people had ever possessed the horse, they had lost him milleniums before. Many and many an Indian had been frightened almost out of his wits by a similar visitation. When the Florida aborigines saw the men of Spain come riding, they mistook them for monsters, half man and half brute. Of course the girl made no such childish mistake, yet she knew at last the white man's power.

And this horseman had not come in peace! His mission was the most terrible that her primitive soul could imagine. And when she glanced to the right and saw another mounted man, and when she glanced to the left and saw still another, and when a party of four appeared on the hill behind, she knew this dread mission would be fulfilled.

No use to fight against the gods! No use to rise against the masters! She was only a forest girl, the daughter of a dark-skinned race, and these were the white men who bridled the wild horses of the elements. Og, too, was only a woods child—easy prey to these conquerors from afar.

She and Og had *not* got away unseen. They had *not* traveled so fast that only the wolf pack could overtake them. They were overtaken now—before the first day's run was done—not by wolves, but by pursuers more resolute, more unpitying, than any pack that ever scoured the forest. The horsemen were closing in, now, from all sides. The race was almost done.

The girl made but one outcry. This was

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a sob that welled up from her very heart. Then she clasped Og's hand and, like a panic-stricken stag, ran up the hill toward the heights beyond.

The sight might have touched the pursuers, had they understood. The struggle was so vain; the end so sure. The twain were heading straight toward the brink of cliffs that even the white goat could not descend. And unless they checked their pace, the horsemen might not capture them after all. They might find the quarry lying dead, facing the heights, their hearts worn out by the mad violence of their struggle.

The mounted men did not urge on their horses. The long chase would end soon enough. So as the fugitives clambered up the slide rock, the pursuers spread out in a fan formation that closed all gates of escape.

Panting and racked with pain, Og and the squaw made the heights at last. Both were near collapse, and the wonder was that they had not fallen long before. Seemingly they had drawn on some strength beyond that of mortal bodies—a courage and a spirit worthy of the god-men themselves. And now they knelt on the summit of the range.

They looked up and they looked down. Above was only the blue sky; below was only empty space, dropping off and down past many a narrow ledge to the slide rock a thousand feet below. Which of these directions might they go?

They were no god-men, to take the air with twenty-foot silver wings. They were not night-hawks, to drop sheer three hundred yards and catch themselves with a cry of ecstasy. Their eyes grew round and childlike as the final meaning came clear.

They looked to one side and then to the other. Perhaps they might find a way around the cliff, whereby they could carry on the race. If they could work their way down, over the slide rock, into those cool wooded depths beside the river, it might be that they could hide away for another night. Folded in each other's arms they might behold again the ancient, life-giving miracle of the rising dawn.

But the ways were closed. They were not mountain rams, to pick their way over precipices. Here, at the brink of the cliff—on this summit where sometimes the little white ptarmigan ran with her brood, and where sometimes the white goat stood facing the sun—the trail had ended. The race was over, and they had lost.

THEY could not go on. They could not turn aside. They could not even go back and try to dodge their enemies, as sometimes a stag at bay dodges a pack of wolves. As they glanced behind, they saw their pursuers already closing in.

Ten minutes more! So be it; they would spend these ten minutes as befitted the children of the forest. They lay still, hand touching hand, and looked down upon their happy hunting ground. They saw the far-off river, like a blue ribbon bought from the trading post. They saw the green highland parks, beloved of the caribou, and the dark spruce forest where the wild hunters lurked. They saw distant chains of lakes where the bull moose wallowed, and the sunlit hills where the bear grubbed for roots. But they did not see the void below them. They looked not upon the barred gates of their prison. Proud at last, with that strange pride of the wild peoples, for a long time they did not even look back at their relentless pursuers.

Og was the first to break. He glanced furtively over his shoulder. The horsemen were drawing in close; he could see their white faces. One of them was the man who had yelled at him, the autumn before. "Ogden Rutheford!" he had called, and the words had stirred Og strangely. Now he and his fellows rode silently, slowly, toward the long-sought prey.

Og clutched the girl's hand in childlike terror. "What will they do?" he begged. "Will they kill me with their fire-sticks?"

She-Who-Laughed smiled wanly, tenderly, and shook her head. No, they would not kill Og. If they had sought his life, they would have taken it long since. With their fire-sticks they could kill at a thousand paces, Wolf Jaw had said; yet at three hundred paces they still rode with their weapons hanging idle in their saddle scabbards. She had known from the first, ever since her talk with the wandering Teslin Indian, that this long search was not merely one of blood.

"Don't be afraid, Og," she whispered. Gently she pressed his hand.

Og pressed her hand to his mouth, as if to choke back a cry of terror. His eyes looked up to her in mute worship. Oh, he loved her for the smile that still hovered, gentle as a twilight dream, at her lips! He could not be so brave, himself—he was only the Dawn Man, not yet the master of his soul—but his wild heart glowed in pride of her. The touch of her hand on his was like a potent charm, like an invincible weapon. It seemed to hold him up and

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

save him. For a breath he was almost calm.

Presently the sight of the nearing horsemen prostrated his heart again. "What are they going to do?" he whispered. "Will they take me away from you?"

A strange look came into the squaw's face. Her eyes were darkly luminous; a quality that was almost beauty graced her Indian features. Again she shook her head.

His pale face flushed. "Are you sure?"

"I am sure, Og. They won't take you away from me. Do you remember what I told you, that day by the flame?"

"I cannot remember. My head is a whirlpool."

"I told you then that we would never part. It is true, my husband. We are mates, you and I. We have hunted together here in the forest."

"It is true." He nodded solemnly. "We have hunted the caribou. We have hunted the moose."

"We have hunted here, and we will hunt —there." The girl pointed skyward. "In the happy hunting ground, my beloved. Again we will chase the caribou—caribou with horns as long as your great arms spread. Again we will chase the moose, with the white fat the depth of your hand on his back."

"But—how do you know?" He was fumbling eagerly at her hands. "Speak quickly—the riders are almost here."

"The little charm at my throat has told me," she answered earnestly. "I will not leave you, my husband. When the riders carry you across the great water, I will go with you."

His heart was leaping now, in dawning hope, but still the cruel doubts plagued him. "But what if they will not let you go?"

"Let me go?" She smiled again, and her eyes were like stars. "Even the white men cannot hold me back. Og, you are fleet of foot. You catch the porcupine in one leap; you run down the ground squirrel in fifty paces. Have you ever caught the shadow of the porcupine, my husband, or the shadow of the ground squirrel?"

"No. No man can catch a shadow."

"That is true. Not even the white men can catch a shadow—or hold it here, or drive it there. Og, put your mouth on mine."

The man obeyed. To her dark lips he pressed his own.

"You feel warmth?" she asked.

"Warmth—and life."

"The warmth is of my body. You have felt it for the last time. When you go away, with the riders, my body will stay here, no more to warm you. But the *life* you felt—that was of my soul. That was of my shadow-self, which will go with you still. Even across the great waters it will go with you."

"I do not understand. I am afraid."

"Do not be afraid. Your wife will never leave you, Og, my husband. Even if you take a woman of your race, it will only be for a little while, and you will know that I am standing in the darkness, waiting. Wherever you go, She-Who-Laughed will be standing in the darkness. And then, after a time, you will leave the other woman, and you and I will hunt again together in the happy hunting ground."

Suddenly he believed her. His child's heart was soothed. "It is true," he said brokenly. "We will hunt together again. And now the riders are climbing their last step."

"Yes. Press your mouth to mine again—quickly, the time is almost gone. And now, my husband, I will make my meaning plain."

Gently she released his hand and stood up. A strange cry rose from her lips—to what god and for what mercy the nearing white men could not dream—and her arms went up in supplication to the sky. Then, with face alight, she stepped off into the empty air.

AS THE girl leaped, the horsemen cried out. Mostly, they invoked their several deities; one or two shouted useless warnings. At the same time they pressed quickly forward.

They did not hope to help the girl. They knew the fate of those who walked off the cliffs of the Yukon Rockies. Even the mountain ewe would be shattered like a lightning-struck tree on the rocks below. But they did hope to save Og. They thought to restrain him from following his mate at once into the happy hunting ground.

It turned out that their fears were groundless. Og had not even attempted to accompany his mate into death. He seemed to know that his fate lay elsewhere; besides, he was Og, the Dawn Man, and the doctrine of suicide had no place in his ever-guiding instincts. His mind was not sufficiently complex to conceive of self-destruction. Not only fear of death, but the basic doctrine of self-preservation would force him to live, even though he hated life. As a slave of natural law, he knew only how to take

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the lives of other people, not his own.

He would stay on perhaps for a long time. Yet something in him, some brave part of him, had instantly died. He felt it wink out in his breast, never to revive again on this earth. Just what it was, he did not know; and if he were taken away, out of these testing-grounds of his brute-man self, perhaps he would never know.

It was the spirit of hope. It was the flame of his courage, his joy in life. He might get along without it in certain stations of civilized life. Indeed, in the place that he was going he might not even realize it had gone. But here, in the forests, its loss would cripple him past recovery. In some wild battle in some wild glade it would spell the difference between victory and defeat.

Except for his loss, he might now arise and fight the horsemen. More than one of them might follow She-Who-Laughed to the rocks below. As it was, he did not even turn to look at them. He stood staring down over the brink of the cliff to a white dot far below, and his face was gray as the crags themselves.

The men came up behind him and gently took hold of his arms. They spoke in quiet tones, as to a frightened animal. Dumb, in the bewilderment of horror, he let them lead him away.

Mourning in that strange, blind way that animals mourn, he hardly knew what they did to him. The days passed dim as dreams. Once he was aware of riding on a horse, and of swift terror that his woe soon obscured. Once he realized that he was in a great canoe—such a craft as his shadow-self had seen, that night he had dreamed so strangely—on an immense area of water. Once he heard a great roaring and tumult, as he rode in a self-moving vehicle among swarming hordes of people.

Still he did not resist. His captors led him where they liked. He followed like a sleepwalker, eyes staring, face blank. He did not understand what they tried to tell him. In the first place, he hardly heard them; in the second place, they talked in a strange tongue.

There came a day that he walked up stone steps, reminding him vaguely of the slide rocks of the mountains. Women met him and took him by the hand—women who wore white robes. Then he was borne aloft, as by invisible wings, and white men in white garments laid him upon a table. And then again, just as on that far-off day in the airplane, there was a rush of shadows, and a blackness that overwhelmed him.

THE surgeons of a great Seattle hospital performed, one August day, a most delicate operation. They removed from the skull of a patient registered as Ogden Rutheford a small bit of bone that had been pressing into his brain.

They mended his fractured skull with a silver plate, drew his scalp over the wound, and sewed it up.

Some two hours later the patient wakened from the anesthesia. He glanced dully at the nurses at his bedside, made a movement that might be taken for a nod of recognition of his surroundings, and dozed again. When he wakened in the bright dawn he felt like talking.

"Heaven knows, we want you to talk," a clear-eyed young surgeon told him. "We can't wait to know how you come to be alive. The whole country wants you to tell—a little at a time, as your condition permits—the story of how you managed to survive more than a year in the wilds of the Yukon, with enough bone-pressure on your brain to kill a horse."

Ogden Rutheford lay still a long time. He gazed blankly at the ceiling. Finally he turned with a smile.

"It's gone," he said simply in English.

"What do you mean?"

"Just what I said. The last thing that I can remember is riding in an airplane and seeing a mountain bearing down on us in the fog. Everything that has happened since is a blank—or so near a blank that it doesn't make sense."

During Rutheford's stay in the hospital the surgeon questioned him often, but almost in vain. No, he did not remember wandering away from the wrecked airplane. He could not recall that he had met a white man in the woods the following fall and was spoken to by name. He did not know how to account for the Indian girl who had fled with him from the search party, and who had committed suicide at the moment of his capture. Occasionally, however, his memory seemed to stir a little in its sleep. At such times he recalled the dim outlines of some wonderful experience, but before he could seize it, it had slipped away.

"I'm disappointed, but I can't say that I'm surprised," the surgeon commented at last. "That's the way the brain usually works, after an attack of amnesia. Of course you recall all your past life up to the time of the accident?"

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Perfectly."

"Well, that's the important thing. It proves that my operation was a complete success. However, how you behaved when you were wandering around, a crazy man, would probably be of some scientific interest. I suppose the young squaw who killed herself had been taking care of you. You couldn't have survived otherwise, I suppose, considering that you were never exactly an outdoor man."

"On the other hand, I am a son of civilization if there ever was one," Ogden Rutheford told him. His accents changed, his vowels were slightly pinched, and he brightened as he talked. Plainly he had got back on a familiar and favorite theme. "To that fact, I think, I owe my survival. Of course the Indians helped me; they probably cut my wood and did the chores. But it was no doubt my trained mind, operating in spite of its injury, that directed them and me. Doesn't that seem a likely theory, doctor?"

The doctor seemed rather unimpressed.

"My superior training-civilization, we shall call it—enabled me to control them and make them serve me," Rutheford went on, immensely pleased with his line of thought. "If this is true it goes to show how far-reaching our civilization is—that it would save a wounded man in the depth of the Yukon forests."

The surgeon grinned a little. "I'll bet some of the grub those Indians cooked for you wasn't altogether civilized."

"I don't know; of course I can't remember. I fancy, though, that I kept them up to the mark. I would like to think that some degree of fastidiousness remained with me, and the Indians kept a cleaner camp than usual. How I do wish I could recall it all!"

Of all the insufferable. . . . But the doctor could not express himself politely, so he turned away.

AFTER many sleeps and many awakenings, Ogden Rutheford left the hospital and went to his own place. He was a well man, and due to physical training he had enjoyed during his year's memory-lapse, he was stronger than he had ever been before.

Indeed, he did not know how strong he was. Having no occasion to use his mighty, rolling muscles, they soon resumed their old proportions. Of course he resumed his regular exercise at his club's gymnasium, and this was strenuous enough to keep him reasonably fit.

He regained a great many of his old habits of body and mind. In one particular, however, he seemed to be changed. Somehow, he found difficulty in wakening his old ardor for Ruth Prentiss, his fiancée. Of course the fact was due simply to his long absence, yet it troubled him more than he cared to tell.

Even so, he married her some six months after leaving the hospital. The ceremony was held at an old church in his home city, and later there was a brilliant reception at the bride's home. He remained unmoved during the rite—somehow, it seemed a vain shadow of something that was once real and true—and the only events of the day that seemed to hold him, to touch him with a queer tenderness, were some silly pranks at the reception. . . . These were merely the rice-throwing, and afterward the tying of a dainty slipper to the door of his limousine. Why he should be moved by such childish nonsense, he simply could not understand.

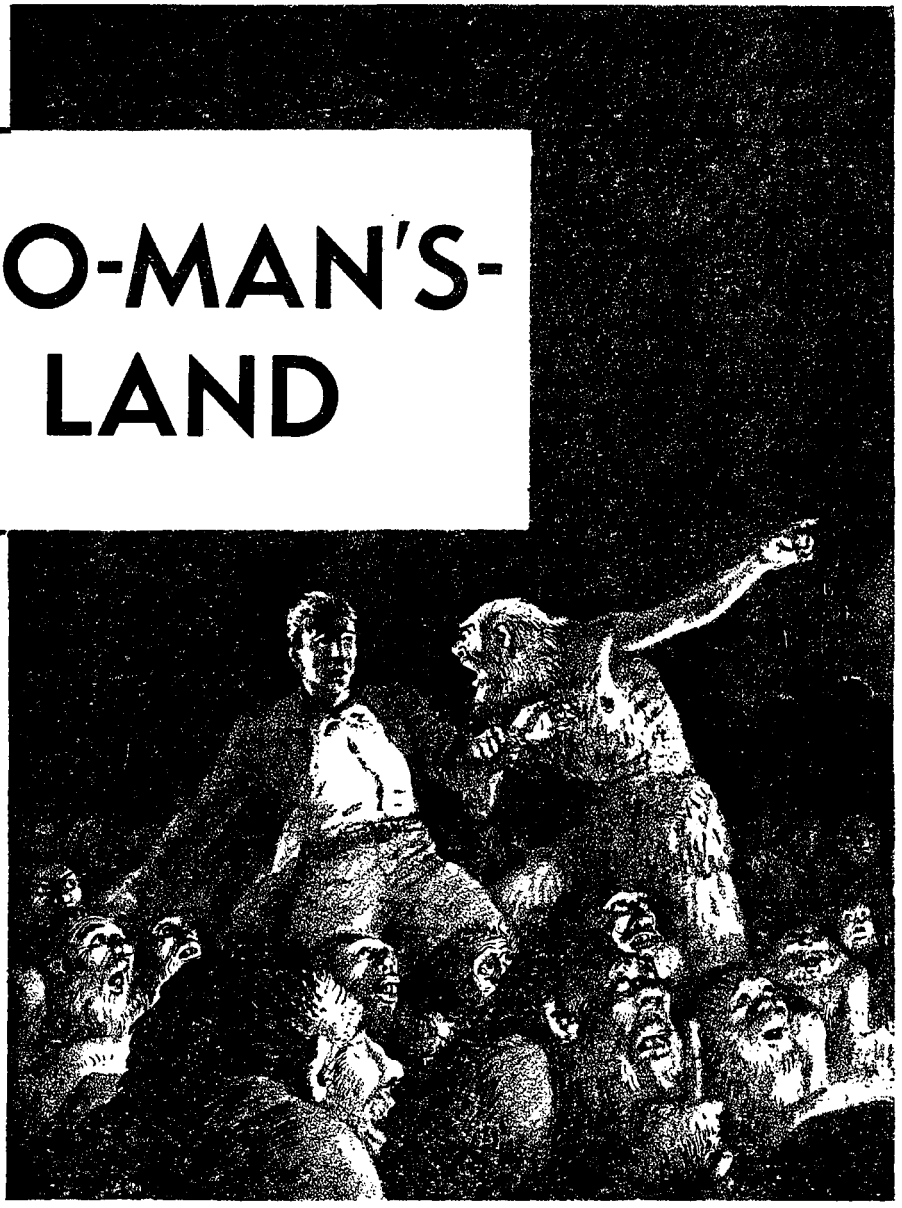
Thereafter, he knew a reasonable degree of married happiness. Ruth presided well over his home, and when she sat at the head of his glistening table, the candlelight flashing up her snow-white arms, he told himself that she was very beautiful. He shared his finest and keenest thoughts with her, and indeed, almost the only thing he ever kept from her were some wild, savage nightmares that sometimes plagued him just before waking. Somehow, he could not tell her about these dreams; he felt an inexplicable reticence. Besides, they made no sense.

And there was one dream that sometimes haunted him in his waking hours. Of all his secrets, this was the most closely guarded. Sometimes, as he stood with his pale wife in their garden, in the glory of the summer moon, his mind would seem to wander. His wife's flower-like countenance would fade from his sight, and he would dimly behold a darker, more savage face. The slim white arm in his would turn tawny-brown; the white throat would seem warm, dusky softness. His own arm would embrace a fuller waist, and a warmer breast would press to his.

At such times he found himself believing in ghosts—in prophecies spoken so long ago that he had forgotten them. And always the vision would leave him with a rare happiness, a quiet elation that he could not understand, a sense of some glorious adventure, waiting him in a green and wind-swept Hereafter.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NO-MAN'S-LAND



By John Buchan

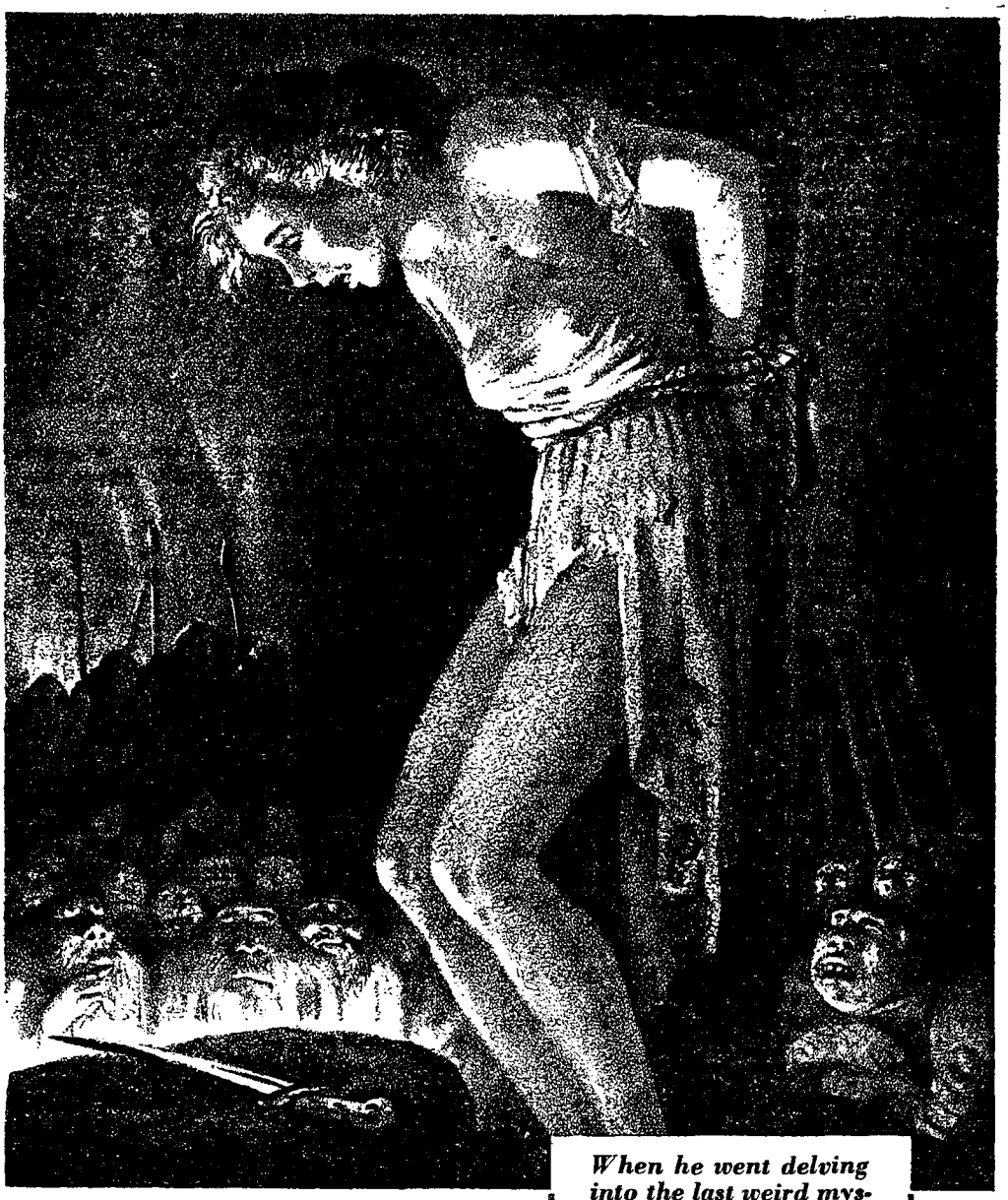
CHAPTER I

THE SHIELING OF FARAWA

IT WAS with a light heart and a pleasing consciousness of holiday that I set out from the inn at Allermuir to tramp my fifteen miles into the unknown. I walked slowly, for I carried my equipment on my back—my basket, fly-books and rods, my plaid of Grant tartan (for I boast myself a distant kinsman of that house), and my great staff, which had tried ere then the front of the steeper Alps. A small valise with books and some changes of linen clothing had been sent on ahead in the shepherd's own hands. It was yet early April, and before me lay four weeks of freedom—twenty-eight blessed days in which to take fish and smoke the pipe of

First North American Magazine Rights purchased from the estate of the author.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



They led me up beside her. . . .

When he went delving into the last weird mysteries of earth spirits, hidden since Time's dawn in the drear fastnesses of the Scottish hills, he thought he had reckoned with every danger that superstition warned of . . . But he forgot the fear-ridden, cringing cave man who dwelt deep inside himself. . . .

idleness. The Lent term had pulled me down, a week of modest enjoyment thereafter in town had finished the work; and I drank in the sharp moorish air like a thirsty man who has been forwandered among deserts.

I am a man of varied tastes and a score of interests. As an undergraduate I had been filled with the old mania for the complete life. I distinguished myself in the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Schools, rowed in my college eight, and reached the distinction of practising for three weeks in the Trials. I had dabbled in a score of learned activities, and when the time came that I won the inevitable St. Chad's fellowship on my chaotic acquirements, and I found myself compelled to select if I would pursue a scholar's life, I had some toil in finding my vocation.

In the end I resolved that the ancient life of the North, of the Celts and the Northmen and the unknown Pictish tribes, held for me the chief fascination. I had acquired a smattering of Gaelic, having been brought up as a boy in Lochaber, and now I set myself to increase my store of languages. I mastered Erse and Icelandic, and my first book—a monograph on the probable Celtic elements in the Eddic songs—brought me the praise of scholars and the deputy-professor's chair of Northern Antiquities.

So much for Oxford. My vacations had been spent mainly in the North—in Ireland, Scotland, and the Isles, in Scandinavia and Iceland, once even in the far limits of Finland. I was a keen sportsman of a sort, an old-experienced fisher, a fair shot with gun and rifle, and in my hillcraft I might well stand comparison with most men. April has ever seemed to me the finest season of the year even in our cold Northern altitudes, and the memory of many bright Aprils had brought me up from the South on the night before to Allerfoot, whence a dog cart had taken me up Glen Aller to the inn at Allermuir and now the same desire had set me on the heather with my face to the cold brown hills.

You are to picture a sort of plateau, benty and rock-strewn, running ridge-wise above a chain of little peaty locks and a vast tract of inexorable bog. In a mile the ridge ceased in a shoulder of hill, and over this lay the head of another glen, with the same doleful accompaniment of sunless lochs, mosses, and a shining and resolute water. East and west and north, in every direction save the south, rose walls of gashed and serrated hills. It was a grey day with blinks of sun, and when a ray chanced to fall on one of the great dark faces, lines of light and colour sprang into being which told of mica and granite.

I was in high spirits, as on the eve of holiday; I had breakfasted excellently on eggs and salmon-steaks; I had no cares to speak of, and my prospects were not uninviting. But in spite of myself the landscape began to take me in thrall and crush me. The silent vanished peoples of the hills seemed to be stirring; dark primeval faces seemed to stare at me from behind boulders and jags of rock. The place was so still, so free from the cheerful clamour of nesting birds, that it seemed a *temenos* sacred to some old-world god. At my feet the lochs lapped ceaselessly; but the waters were so dark that one could not see bottom a foot from the edge. On my right the links of green told of snake-like mires waiting to crush the unwary wanderer. It seemed to me for the moment a land of death, where the tongues of the dead cried aloud for recognition.

My whole morning's walk was full of such fancies. I lit a pipe to cheer me, but the things would not be got rid of. I thought of the Gaels who had held those fastnesses; I thought of the Britons before them, who yielded to their advent. They were all strong peoples in their day, and now they had gone the way of the earth. They had left their mark on the levels of the glens and on the more habitable uplands, both in names and in actual forts, and graves where men might still dig curios.

But the hills—that black stony amphitheatre before me—it seemed strange that the hills bore no traces of them. And then with some uneasiness I reflected on that older and stranger race who were said to have held the hill-tops. The Picts, the Picti—what in the name of goodness were they? They had troubled me in all my studies, a sort of blank wall to put an end to speculation. We knew nothing of them save certain strange names which men called Pictish, and the names of those hills in front of me—the Muneraw, the Yirnie, the Calmarton. They were the *corpus vile* for learned experiment; but Heaven alone knew what dark abyss of savagery once yawned in the midst of this desert.

AND then I remembered the crazy theories of a pupil of mine at St. Chad's, the son of a small landowner on the Aller, a young gentleman who had spent his substance too freely at Oxford, and was now dreeing his weird in the Backwoods. He had been no scholar; but a certain imagination marked all his doings, and of a Sunday night he would come and talk to me of the North. The Picts were his special subject, and his ideas were mad.

"Listen to me," he would say, when I had mixed him toddy and given him one of my cigars; "I believe there are traces—ay, more than traces—of an old culture lurk-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ing in those hills and waiting to be discovered. We never hear of the Picts being driven from the hills. The Britons drove them from the lowlands, the Gaels from Ireland did the same for the Britons but the hills were left unmolested. We hear of no one going near them except outlaws and tinklers. And in that very place you have the strangest mythology.

"Take the story of the Brownie. What is that but the story of a little swart man of uncommon strength and cleverness, who does good and ill indiscriminately, and then disappears? There are many scholars, as you yourself confess, who think that the origin of the Brownie was in some mad belief in the old race of the Picts, which still survived somewhere in the hills. And do we not hear of the Brownie in 1756? After that, when people grew more incredulous, it is natural that the belief should have begun to die out but I do not see why stray traces should not have survived till late."

"Do you not see what that means?" I had said in mock gravity. "Those same hills are, if anything, less known now than they were a hundred years ago. Why should not your Picts or Brownies be living to this day?"

"Why not, indeed?" he had rejoined, in all seriousness.

I laughed, and he went to his rooms and returned with a large leather-bound book. It was lettered, in the rococo style of a young man's taste, "Glimpses of the Unknown," and some of the said glimpses he proceeded to impart to me. It was not pleasant reading; indeed, I had rarely heard anything so well fitted to shatter sensitive nerves. The early part consisted of folk-tales and folk-sayings, some of them wholly obscure, some of them with a glint of meaning, but all of them with some hint of a mystery in the hills. I heard the Brownie story in countless versions. Now the thing was a friendly little man, who wore grey breeches and lived on brose; now he was a twisted being, the sight of which caused strange distempers among the farm animals. But the second part was the stranger, for it was made up of actual tales, most of them with date and place appended. It was a most Bedlamite catalogue of horrors, which, if true, made the wholesome moors a place instinct with tragedy. Some told of children carried away from villages, even from towns, on the verge of the uplands, and the strange fact was their utter disappearance. Two little girls would be coming home from school, would be seen last by a neighbour just where the road crossed a patch of heath or entered a wood and then—no human eyes ever saw them again.

Children's cries had startled outlying shepherds in the night, and when they had rushed to the door they could hear nothing but the night wind. The instances of such disappearances were not very common—perhaps once in twenty years—but they were confined to this one tract of country, and came in a sort of fixed progression from the middle of last century, when the record began. But this was only one side of the history. The latter part was all devoted to a chronicle of crimes which had gone unpunished, seeing that no hand had been traced. The list was fuller in last century;[1] in the earlier years of the present it had dwindled; then came a revival about the 'Fifties; and now again in our own time it had sunk low.

At the little cottage of Auchterbrean, on the roadside in Glen Aller, a labourer's wife had been found pierced to the heart. It was thought to be a case of a woman's jealousy, and her neighbour was accused, convicted, and hanged. The woman, to be sure, denied the charge with her last breath; but circumstantial evidence seemed sufficiently strong against her. Yet some people in the glen believed her guiltless.

In particular, the carrier who had found the dead woman declared that the way in which her neighbour received the news was a sufficient proof of innocence, and the doctor who was first summoned professed himself unable to tell with what instrument the wound had been given. But this was all before the days of expert evidence, so the woman had been hanged without scruple.

Then there had been another story of peculiar horror, telling of the death of an old man at some little lonely shieling called Carrickfey. But at this point I had risen in protest, and made to drive the young idiot from my room.

"It was my grandfather who collected most of them," he said. "He had theories,[2]

[1]The narrative of Mr. Graves was written in the year 1898.

[2]In the light of subsequent events I have jotted down the materials to which I refer. The last authentic record of the Brownie is in the narrative of the shepherd of Clachlands, taken down towards the close of last century by the Reverend Mr. Gillespie, minister of Allerkirk, and included by him in his "Songs and Legends of Glen Aller." The authorities on the strange carrying-away of children are to be found in a series of articles in a local paper, the "Allerfoot Advertiser," September and October 1878, and a curious book published anonymously at Edinburgh in 1848, entitled "The Weathergaw."

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

but people called him mad, so he was wise enough to hold his tongue. My father declares the whole thing mania—but I rescued the book, had it bound, and added to the collection. It is a queer hobby; but, as I say, I have theories, and there are more things in heaven and earth—"

But at this he heard a friend's voice in the Quad, and dived out, leaving the banal quotation unfinished.

Strange though it may seem, this madness kept coming back to me as I crossed the last few miles of moor. I was now on a rough tableland, the watershed between two lochs, and beyond and above me rose the stony backs of the hills. The burns fell down in a chaos of granite boulders; huge slabs of grey stone lay flat and tumbled in the heather. The full waters looked prosperously for my fishing, and I began to forget all fancies in anticipation of sport.

Then suddenly in a hollow of land I came on a ruined cottage. It had been a very small place, but the walls were still half-erect, and the little moorland garden was outlined on the turf. A lonely apple-tree, twisted and gnarled with the winds, stood in the midst.

From higher up on the hill I heard a loud roar, and I knew my excellent friend the shepherd of Farawa, who had come thus far to meet me. He greeted me with the boisterous embarrassment which was his way of prefacing hospitality. A grave reserved man at other times, on such occasions he thought it proper to relapse into hilarity. I fell into step with him, and we set off for his dwelling. But first I had the curiosity to look back to the tumble-down cottage and ask him its name.

A queer look came into his eyes. "They ca' the place Carrickfey," he said. "Nae-body has daured to bide there this twenty year sin'—but I see ye ken the story." And, as if glad to leave the subject, he hastened to discourse on fishing.

THE shepherd was a masterful man; tall, save for the stoop which belongs to all moorland folk, and active as a wild goat. He was not a new importation, nor did he belong to the place; for his people had lived in the remote Borders, and he had come as a boy to this shieling of Farawa. He was unmarried, but an elderly sister lived with him and cooked his meals. He was reputed to be extraordinarily skilful in his trade; I know for a fact that he was in his way a keen sportsman; and his few neighbours gave him credit for a sincere piety. Doubtless this last report was due in part to his silence, for after his first greeting he was wont to relapse into a singular taciturnity. As we strode across the heather he gave me a short outline of his year's lambing. "Five pair o' twins yestreen, twae this morn; that makes thirty-five yowes that hae lambed since the sabbath. I'll dae weel if God's willin'." Then, as I looked towards the hilltops whence the thin mist of morn was trailing, he followed my gaze. "See," he said with uplifted crook— "see that sicht. Is that no what is written of in the Bible when it says, 'The mountains do smoke.'?" And with this piece of exegesis he finished his talk, and in a little we were at the cottage.

It was a small enough dwelling in truth, and yet large for a moorland house, for it had a garret below the thatch, which was given up to my sole enjoyment. Below was the wide kitchen with box-beds, and next to it the inevitable second room, also with its cupboard sleeping-places. The interior was very clean, and yet I remember to have been struck with the faint musty smell which is inseparable from moorland dwellings. The kitchen pleased me best, for there the great rafters were black with peat-reek, and the uncovered stone floor, on which the fire gleamed dully, gave an air of primeval simplicity. But the walls spoiled all, for tawdry things of today had penetrated even there. Some grocers' almanacs—years old—hung in places of honour, and an extraordinary lithograph of the Royal Family in its youth. And this, mind you, between crooks and fishing-rods and old guns, and horns of sheep and deer.

The life for the first day or two was regular and placid. I was up early, breakfasted on porridge (a dish which I detest), and then off to the lochs and streams. At first my sport prospered mightily. With a drake-wing I killed a salmon of seventeen pounds, and the next day had a fine basket of trout from a hill-burn. Then for no earthly reason the weather changed. A bitter wind came out of the north-east, bringing showers of snow and stinging hail, and lashing the waters into storm. It was now farewell to fly-fishing. For a day or two I tried trolling with the minnow on the lochs, but it was poor sport, for I had no boat, and the edges were soft and mossy. Then in disgust I gave up the attempt, went back to the cottage, lit my biggest pipe, and sat down with a book to await the turn of the weather.

The shepherd was out from morning

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

till night at his work, and when he came in at last, dog-tired, his face would be set and hard, and his eyes heavy with sleep. The strangeness of the man grew upon me. He had a shrewd brain beneath his thatch of hair, for I had tried him once or twice, and found him abundantly intelligent. He had some smattering of an education, like all Scottish peasants, and, as I have said, he was deeply religious. I set him down as a fine type of his class, sober, serious, keenly critical, free from the bondage of superstition. But I rarely saw him, and our talk was chiefly in monosyllables—short interjected accounts of the number of lambs dead or alive on the hill. Then he would produce a pencil and note-book, and be immersed in some calculation; and finally he would be revealed sleeping heavily in his chair, till his sister wakened him, and he stumbled off to bed.

SO MUCH for the ordinary course of life; but one day—the second, I think, of the bad weather—the extraordinary happened. The storm had passed in the afternoon into a resolute and blinding snow, and the shepherd, finding it hopeless on the hill, came home about three o'clock. I could make out from his way of entering that he was in a great temper. He kicked his feet savagely against the door-post. Then he swore at his dogs, a thing I had never heard him do before. "Hell!" he cried. "Can ye no keep out o' my road, ye britts?" Then he came sullenly into the kitchen, thawed his numbed hands at the fire, and sat down to his meal.

I made some aimless remark about the weather.

"Death to man and beast," he grunted. "I hae got the sheep doun frae the hill, but the lambs will never thole this. We maun pray that it will no last."

His sister came in with some fish. "Margit," he cried, "three lambs away this morning, and three deid wi' the hole in the throat."

The woman's face visibly paled. "Guid help us, Adam; that hasna happened this three years."

"It has happened noo," he said, surlily. "But, by God! if it happens again I'll gang mysel' to the Scarts o' the Muneraw."

"O Adam!" the woman cried shrilly, "haud your tongue. Ye kenna wha hears ye." And with a frightened glance at me, she left the room.

I asked no questions, but waited till the shepherd's anger should cool. But the cloud did not pass so lightly. When he had finished his dinner he pulled his chair to the fire and sat staring moodily. He made some sort of apology to me for his conduct. "I'm sore troubled, sir; but I'm vexed ye should see me like this. Maybe things will be better the morn." And then, lighting his short black pipe, he resigned himself to his meditation.

But he could not keep quiet. Some nervous unrest seemed to have possessed the man. He got up with a start and went to the window, where the snow was drifting unsteadily past. As he stared out into the storm I heard him mutter to himself, "Three away, God help me, and three wi' the hole in the throat."

Then he turned round to me abruptly. I was jotting down notes for an article I contemplated in the "Revue Celtique". My thoughts were far away from the present. The man recalled me by demanding fiercely, "Do ye believe in God?"

I gave him some sort of answer in the affirmative.

"Then do ye believe in the Devil?" he asked.

The reply must have been less satisfastory, for he came forward and flung himself violently into the chair before me.

"What do ye ken about it?" he cried. "You that bides in a southern toun, what can ye ken o' the God that works in thae hills and the Devil—ay, the manifold devils—that He suffers to bide here? I tell ye man, that if ye had seen what I have seen ye wad be on your knees at this moment praying to God to pardon your unbelief. There are devils at the back o' every stane and hidin' in every cleuch, and it's by the grace o' God alone that a man is alive upon the earth." His voice had risen high and shrill, and then suddenly he cast a frightened glance towards the window and was silent.

I began to think that the man's wits were unhinged, and the thought did not give me satisfaction. I had no relish for the prospect of being left alone in this moorland dwelling with the cheerful company of a maniac. But his next movements reassured me. He was clearly only dead-tired, for he fell sound asleep in his chair, and by the time his sister brought tea and wakened him, he seemed to have got the better of his excitement.

When the window was shuttered and the lamp lit, I set myself again to the completion of my notes. The shepherd had

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

got out his Bible, and was solemnly reading with one great finger travelling down the lines. He was smoking, and whenever some text came home to him with power he would make pretence to underline it with the end of the stem. Soon I had finished the work I desired, and, my mind being full of my pet hobby, I fell into an inquisitive mood, and began to question the solemn man opposite on the antiquities of the place.

He stared stupidly at me when I asked him concerning monuments or ancient weapons.

"I kenna," said he. "There's a heap o' queer things in the hills."

"This place should be a centre for such relics. You know that the name of the hill behind the house, as far as I can make it out, means the 'Place of the Little Men.' It is a good Gaelic word, though there is some doubt about its exact interpretation. But clearly the Gaelic peoples did not speak of themselves when they gave the name; they must have referred to some older and stranger population."

The shepherd looked at me dully, as not understanding.

"It is partly this fact—besides the fishing, of course—which interests me in this countryside," said I, gaily.

Again he cast the same queer frightened glance towards the window. "If ye'll tak the advice of an aulder man," he said, slowly, "ye'll let well alane and no meddle wi' uncanny things."

I laughed pleasantly, for at last I had found out my hard-headed host in a piece of childishness. "Why, I thought that you of all men would be free from superstition."

"What do ye call supersteetion?" he asked.

"A belief in old wives' tales," said I, "a trust in the crude supernatural and the patently impossible."

He looked at me beneath his shaggy brows. "How do ye ken what is impossible? Mind ye, sir, ye're no in the toun just now, but in the thick of the wild hills."

"But, hang it all, man," I cried, "you don't mean to say that you believe in that sort of thing? I am prepared for many things up here, but not for the Brownie—though, to be sure, if one could meet him in the flesh, it would be rather pleasant than otherwise for he was a companionable sort of fellow."

"When a thing pits the fear o' death on a man he aye speaks well of it."

It was true—the Eumenides and the Good Folk over again; and I awoke with interest to the fact that the conversation was getting into strange channels.

THE shepherd moved uneasily in his chair. "I am a man that fears God, and has nae time for daft stories; but I havena traivelled the hills for twenty years wi' my een shut. If I say that I could tell ye stories o' faces seen in the mist, and queer things that have knocked against me in the snaw, wad ye believe me? I wager ye wadna. Ye wad say I had been drunk, and yet I am a God-fearing temperate man."

He rose and went to a cupboard, unlocked it, and brought out something in his hand, which he held out to me. I took it with some curiosity, and found that it was a flint arrow-head.

Clearly a flint arrow-head, and yet like none that I had ever seen in any collection. For one thing it was larger, and the barb less clumsily thick. More, the chipping was new, or comparatively so; this thing had not stood the wear of fifteen hundred years among the stones of the hillside. Now there are, I regret to say, institutions which manufacture primitive relics; but it is not hard for a practised eye to see the difference. The chipping has either a regularity and a balance which is unknown in the real thing, or the rudeness has been overdone, and the result is an implement incapable of harming a mortal creature. But this was the real thing if it ever existed; and yet—I was prepared to swear on my reputation that it was not half a century old.

"Where did you get this?" I asked with some nervousness.

"I hae a story about that," said the shepherd. "Outside the door there ye can see a muckle flat stane aside the buchts. One simmer nicht I was sitting there smoking till the dark, and I wager there was naething on the stane then. But that same nicht I awoke wi' a queer thocht, as if there were folk moving around the hoose—folk that didna mak' muckle noise. I mind o' lookin' out o' the windy, and I could hae sworn I saw something black movin' amang the heather and intil the buchts. Now I had maybe threescore o' lambs there that nicht, for I had to tak' them many miles off in the early morning.

"Weel, when I gets up about four o'clock and gangs out, as I am passing the muckle stane I finds this bit errow. 'That's come here in the nicht,' says I, and I wunnered a wee and put it in my

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

pouch. But when I came to my faulds what did I see? Five o' my best hoggs were away, and three mair were lying deid wi' a hole in their throat."

"Who in the world—?" I began.

"Dinna ask," said he. "If I aince sterted to speir about thae maitters, I wadna keep my reason."

"Then that was what happened on the hill this morning?"

"Even sae, and it has happened mair than aince sin' that time. It's the most uncanny slaughter, for sheep-stealing I can understand, but no this pricking o' the puir beasts' wizands. I kenna how they dae't either, for it's no wi' a knife or any common tool."

"Have you never tried to follow the thieves?"

"Have I no?" he asked, grimly. "If it had been common sheep-stealers I wad hae had them by the heels, though I had followed them a hundred miles. But this is no common. I've tracked them, and it's ill they are to track; but I never got beyond ae place, and that was the Scarts o' the Muneraw that ye've heard me speak o'."

"But who in Heaven's name are the people? Tinklers or poachers or what?"

"Ay," said he, drily. "Even so. Tinklers and poachers whae wark wi' stane errows and kill sheep by a hole in their throat. Lord, I kenna what they are, unless the Muckle Deil himsel'."

The conversation had passed beyond my comprehension. In this prosaic hard-headed man I had come on the dead-rock of superstition and blind fear.

"That is only the story of the Brownie over again, and he is an exploded myth," I said, laughing.

"Are ye the man that exploded it?" said the shepherd, rudely. "I trow no, neither you not ony ither. My bonny man, if ye lived a twalmonth in thae hills, ye wad sing safter about exploded myths, as ye call them."

"I tell you what I would do," said I. "If I lost sheep as you lose them, I would go up the Scarts of the Muneraw and never rest till I had settled the question once and for all." I spoke hotly, for I was vexed by the man's childish fear.

"I daresay ye wad," he said, slowly. "But then I am no you, and maybe I ken mair o' what is in the Scarts o' the Muneraw. Maybe I ken that whilk, if ye kenned it, wad send ye back to the South Country wi' your hert in your mouth. But, as I say, I am no sae brave as you, for I saw something in the first year o' my herding here which put the terror o' God on me, and makes me a fearfu' man to this day. Ye ken the story o' the gudeman o' Carrickfey?"

I nodded.

"Weel, I was the man that fand him. I had seen the deid afore and I've seen them since. But never have I seen aucht like the look in that man's een. What he saw at his death I may see the morn, so I walk before the Lord in fear."

Then he rose and stretched himself. "It's bedding-time, for I maun be up at three," and with a short good night he left the room.

CHAPTER II

THE DARKNESS THAT IS UNDER THE EARTH

THE next morning was fine, for the snow had been intermittent, and soon melted except in the high corries. True, it was deceptive weather, for the wind had gone to the rainy south-west, and the masses of cloud on that horizon boded ill for the afternoon. But some days' inaction had made me keen for a chance of sport, so I rose with the shepherd and set out for the day.

He asked me where I proposed to begin. I told him the tarn called the Loch o' the Threshes, which lies over the back of the Muneraw on another watershed. It is on the ground of the Rhynns Forest, and I had fished it of old from the Forest House. I knew the merits of the trout, and I knew its virtues in a south-west wind, so I had resolved to go thus far afield.

The shepherd heard the name in silence. "Your best road will be ower that rig, and syne on to the water o' Caulds. Keep abune the moss till ye come to the place they ca' the Nick o' the Threshes. That will take ye to the very lochside, but it's a lang road and a sair."

The morning was breaking over the bleak hills. Little clouds drifted athwart the corries, and wisps of haze fluttered from the peaks. A great rosy flush lay over one side of the glen, which caught the edge of the sluggish bog-pools and turned them to fire. Never before had I seen the mountain-land so clear, for far back into the east and west I saw mountain-tops set as close as flowers in a border, black crags seamed with silver lines which I knew for mighty waterfalls, and below at my feet the lower slopes fresh with the dewy green of spring. A name stuck in my memory.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Where are the Scarts of the Muneraw?" I asked.

The shepherd pointed to the great hill which bears the name, and which lies, a huge mass, above the watershed.

"D'ye see you corrie at the east that runs straucht up the side? It looks a bit scart, but it's sae deep that it's aye derk at the bottom o't. Weel, at the tap o' the rig it meets anither corrie that runs doun the ither side, and that one they ca' the Scarts. There is a sort o' burn in it that flows intil the Dule and sae intil the Aller, and, indeed, if ye were gaun there it wad be from Aller Glen that your best road wad lie. But it's an ill bit, and ye'll be sair guidit if ye try't."

There he left me and went across the glen, while I struck upwards over the ridge. At the top I halted and looked down on the wide glen of the Caulds, which there is little better than a bog, but lower down grows into a green pastoral valley. The great Muneraw still dominated the landscape, and the black scaur on its side seemed blacker than before. The place fascinated me, for in that fresh morning air the shepherd's fears seemed monstrous. "Some day," said I to myself, "I will go and explore the whole of that mighty hill." Then I descended and struggled over the moss, found the Nick, and in two hours' time was on the loch's edge.

I have little in the way of good to report of the fishing. For perhaps one hour the trout took well; after that they sulked steadily for the day. The promise, too, of fine weather had been deceptive. By midday the rain was falling in that soft soaking fashion which gives no hope of clearing.

The mist was down to the edge of the water, and I cast my flies into a blind sea of white. It was hopeless work, and yet from a sort of ill-temper I stuck to it long after my better judgment had warned me of its folly. At last, about three in the afternoon, I struck my camp, and prepared myself for a long and toilsome retreat.

And long and toilsome it was beyond anything I had ever encountered. Had I had a vestige of sense I would have followed the burn from the loch down to the Forest House. The place was shut up, but the keeper would gladly have given me shelter for the night. But foolish pride was too strong in me. I had found my road in mist before, and could do it again.

Before I got to the top of the hill I had repented my decision; when I got there I repented it more. For below me was a dizzy chaos of grey; there was no landmark visible; and before me I knew was the bog through which the Caulds Water twined. I had crossed it with some trouble in the morning, but then I had light to pick my steps. Now I could only stumble on, and in five minutes I might be in a bog-hole, and in five more in a better world.

But there was no help to be got from hesitation, so with a rueful courage I set off. The place was if possible worse than I had feared. Wading up to the knees with nothing before you but a blank wall of mist and the cheerful consciousness that your next step may be your last—such was my state for one weary mile. The stream itself was high, and rose to my armpits, and once and again I only saved myself by a violent leap backwards from a pitiless green slough. But at last it was past, and I was once more on the solid ground of the hillside.

Now, in the thick weather I had crossed the glen much lower down than in the morning; and the result was that the hill on which I stood was one of the giants which, with the Muneraw for centre, guard the watershed. Had I taken the proper way, the Nick o' the Threshes would have led me to the Caulds, and then once over the bog a little ridge was all that stood between me and the glen of Farawa. But instead I had come a wild cross-country road, and was now, though I did not know it, nearly as far from my destination as at the start.

Well for me that I did not know, for I was wet and dispirited, and had I not fancied myself all but home, I should scarcely have had the energy to make this last ascent. But soon I found it was not the little ridge I had expected. I looked at my watch and saw that it was five o'clock. When, after the weariest climb, I lay on a piece of level ground which seemed the top, I was not surprised to find that it was now seven. The darkening must be at hand, and sure enough the mist seemed to be deepening into a greyish black. I began to grow desperate. Here I was on the summit of some infernal mountain, without any certainty where my road lay. I was lost with a vengeance, and at the thought I began to be acutely afraid.

I TOOK what seemed to me the way I had come, and began to descend steeply. Then something made me halt, and the next instant I was lying on my face trying painfully to retrace my steps. For I had

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

found myself slipping, and before I could stop, my feet were dangling over a precipice with Heaven alone knows how many yards of sheer mist between me and the bottom. Then I tried keeping the ridge, and took that to the right, which I thought would bring me nearer home. It was no good trying to think out a direction, for in the fog my brain was running round, and I seemed to stand on a pinpoint of space where the laws of the compass had ceased to hold.

It was the roughest sort of walking, now stepping warily over acres of loose stones, now crawling down the face of some battered rock, and now wading in the long dripping heather. The soft rain had begun to fall again, which completed my discomfort. I was now seriously tired, and, like all men who in their day have bent too much over books, I began to feel it in my back. My spine ached, and my breath came in short broken pants. It was a pitiable state of affairs for an honest man who had never encountered much grave discomfort. To ease myself I was compelled to leave my basket behind me, trusting to return and find it, if I should ever reach safety and discover on what pathless hill I had been strayed. My rod I used as a staff, but it was of little use, for my fingers were getting too numb to hold it.

Suddenly from the blankness I heard a sound as of human speech. At first I thought it mere craziness—the cry of a weasel or a hill-bird distorted by my ears. But again it came, thick and faint, as through acres of mist, and yet clearly the sound of "articulate-speaking men." In a moment I lost my despair and cried out in answer. This was some forwandered traveller like myself, and between us we could surely find some road to safety. So I yelled back at the pitch of my voice and waited intently.

But the sound ceased, and there was utter silence again. Still I waited, and then from some place much nearer came the same soft mumbling speech. I could make nothing of it. Heard in that drear place it made the nerves tense and the heart timorous. It was the strangest jumble of vowels and consonants I had ever met.

A dozen solutions flashed through my brain. It was some maniac talking Jabberwock to himself. It was some belated traveller whose wits had given out in fear. Perhaps it was only some shepherd who was amusing himself thus, and whiling the way with nonsense. Once again I cried out.

Then suddenly in the hollow trough of mist before me, where things could still be half discerned, there appeared a figure. It was little and squat and dark; naked, apparently, but so rough with hair that it wore the appearance of a skin-covered being. It crossed my line of vision, not staying for a moment, but in its face and eyes there seemed to lurk an elder world of mystery and barbarism, a troll-like life which was too horrible for words.

The shepherd's fear came back on me like a thunderclap. For one awful instant my legs failed me, and I had almost fallen. The next I had turned and ran shrieking up the hill.

If he who may read this narrative has never felt the force of an overmastering terror, then let him thank his Maker and pray that he never may. I am no weak child, but a strong grown man, accredited in general with sound sense and little suspected of hysterics. And yet I went up that brae-face with my heart fluttering like a bird and my throat aching with fear. I screamed in short dry gasps; involuntarily, for my mind was beyond all purpose. I felt that beast-like clutch at my throat; those red eyes seemed to be staring at me from the mist; I heard ever behind and before and on all sides the patter of those inhuman feet.

Before I knew I was down, slipping over a rock and falling some dozen feet into a soft marshy hollow. I was conscious of lying still for a second and whimpering like a child. But as I lay there I awoke to the silence of the place. There was no sound of pursuit; perhaps they had lost my track and given up. My courage began to return, and from this it was an easy step to hope. Perhaps after all it had been merely an illusion, for folk do not see clearly in the mist, and I was already done with weariness.

But even as I lay in the green moss and began to hope, the faces of my pursuers grew up through the mist. I stumbled madly to my feet; but I was hemmed in, the rock behind and my enemies before. With a cry I rushed forward, and struck wildly with my rod at the first dark body. It was as if I had struck an animal, and the next second the thing was wrenched from my grasp. But still they came no nearer.

I stood trembling there now in the centre of those malignant devils, my brain a mere weathercock, and my heart crushed shapeless with horror. At last the end came, for with the vigour of madness I

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

flung myself on the nearest, and we rolled on the ground. Then the monstrous things seemed to close over me, and with a choking cry I passed into unconsciousness.

THERE is an unconsciousness that is not wholly dead, where a man feels numbly and the body lives without the brain. I was beyond speech or thought, and yet I felt the upward or downward motion as the way lay in hill or glen, and I most assuredly knew when the open air was changed for the close underground. I could feel dimly that lights were flared in my face, and that I was laid in some bed on the earth. Then with the stopping of movement the real sleep of weakness seized me, and for long I knew nothing.

* * *

Morning came over the moors with birdsong and the glory of fine weather. The streams were still rolling in spate, but the hill-pastures were alight with dawn, and the little seams of snow were glistening like white fire. A ray from the sunrise cleft its path somehow into the abyss, and danced on the wall above my couch. It caught my eyes as I wakened, and for long I lay crazily wondering what it meant. My head was splitting with pain, and in my heart was the same fluttering nameless fear. I did not wake to full consciousness; not till the twinkle of sun from the clean bright out-of-doors caught my senses did I realise that I lay in a great dark place with a glow of dull firelight in the middle.

In time things rose and moved around me, a few ragged shapes of men, without clothing, shambling with their huge feet and looking towards me with curved beast-like glances. I tried to marshal my thoughts, and slowly, bit by bit, I built up the present. There was no question to my mind of dreaming; the past hours had scored reality upon my brain. Yet I cannot say that fear was my chief feeling. The first crazy terror had subsided, and now I felt mainly a sickened disgust with just a tinge of curiosity. I found that my knife, watch, flask, and money had gone, but they had left me a map of the countryside. It seemed strange to look at the calico, with the name of a London printer stamped on the back, and lines of railway and highroad running through every shire. Decent and comfortable civilisation! And here was I a prisoner in this den of nameless folk, and in the midst of a life which history knew not.

Courage is a virtue which grows with reflection and the absence of the immediate peril. I thought myself into some sort of resolution, and lo! when the Folk approached me and bound my feet I was back at once in the most miserable terror. They tied me, all but my hands, with some strong cord, and carried me to the centre, where the fire was glowing. Their soft touch was the acutest torture to my nerves, but I stifled my cries lest someone should lay his hand on my mouth. Had that happened, I am convinced my reason would have failed me.

So there I lay in the shine of the fire, with the circle of unknown things around me. There seemed but three or four, but I took no note of number. They talked huskily among themselves in a tongue which sounded all gutturals. Slowly my fear became less an emotion that a habit, and I had room for the smallest shade of curiosity. I strained my ear to catch a word, but it was a mere chaos of sound. The thing ran and thundered in my brain as I stared dumbly into the vacant chair. Then I thought that unless I spoke I should certainly go crazy, for my head was beginning to swim at the strange cooing noise.

I spoke a word or two in my best Gaelic, and they closed round me inquiringly. Then I was sorry I had spoken, for my words had brought them nearer, and I shrank at the thought. But as the faint echoes of my speech hummed in the rock-chamber, I was struck by a curious kinship of sound. Mine was sharper, more distinct, and staccato; theirs was blurred, formless, but still with a certain root-resemblance.

Then from the back there came an older being, who seemed to have heard my words. He was like some foul grey badger, his red eyes sightless, and his hands trembling on a stump of bog-oak. The others made way for him with such deference as they were capable of, and the thing squatted down by me and spoke to me.

To my amazement his words were familiar. It was some manner of speech akin to the Gaelic, but broadened, lengthened, coarsened. I remembered an old book-tongue, commonly supposed to be an impure dialect once used in Brittany, which I had met in the course of my researches. The words recalled it, and as far as I could remember the thing, I asked him who he was and where the place might be.

He answered me in the same speech—

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

still more broadened, lengthened, coarsened. I lay back with sheer amazement. I had found the key to this unearthly life.

For a little an insatiable curiosity, the ardour of the scholar, prevailed. I forgot the horror of the place, and thought only of the fact that here before me was the greatest find that scholarship had ever made. I was precipitated into the heart of the past. Here must be the fountain-head of all legends, the chrysalis of all beliefs. I actually grew lighthearted. This strange folk around me were now no more shapeless things of terror, but objects of research and experiment. I almost came to think them not unfriendly.

FOR an hour I enjoyed the highest of earthly pleasures. In that strange conversation I heard—in fragments and suggestions—the history of the craziest survival the world has ever seen. I heard of the struggles with invaders, preserved as it were in a sort of shapeless poetry. There were bitter words against the Gaelic oppressor, bitterer words against the Saxon stranger, and for a moment ancient hatreds flared into life. Then there came the tale of the hill-refuge, the morbid hideous existence preserved for centuries amid a changing world. I heard fragments of old religions, primeval names of god and goddess, half-understood by the Folk, but to me the key to a hundred puzzles. Tales which survive to us in broken disjointed riddles were intact here in living form. I lay on my elbow and questioned feverishly. At any moment they might become morose and refuse to speak. Clearly it was my duty to make the most of a brief good fortune.

And then the tale they told me grew more hideous. I heard of the circumstances of the life itself and their daily shifts for existence. It was a murderous chronicle—a history of unmentionable deeds in the darkness. The ghoulish carrying away of children from the lowlands was spoken of, which I had heard of but never credited. Then there were bestial murders in lonely cottages, done for God knows what purpose. Sometimes the occupant had seen more than was safe, sometimes the deed was the mere exuberance of an urge to slay. As they gabbled their tales my heart's blood froze, and I lay back in the agonies of fear. If they had used the others thus, what way of escape was open for myself? I had been brought to this place, and not murdered on the spot. Clearly there was torture before death in store for me, and I confess I quailed at the thought.

But none molested me. The elders continued to jabber out their stories, while I lay tense and deaf. Then to my amazement food was brought and placed beside me—almost with respect. Clearly my murder was not a thing of the immediate future. The meal was some form of mutton—perhaps the shepherd's lost ewes—and a little smoking was all the cooking it had got. I strove to eat, but the tasteless morsels choked me. Then they set drink before me in a curious cup, which I seized eagerly, for my mouth was dry with thirst. The vessel was of gold, rudely formed, but of the pure metal, and a coarse design in circles ran around the middle.

This surprised me enough, but a greater wonder awaited me. The liquor was not water, as I had guessed, but a sort of sweet ale, a miracle of flavour. The taste was curious, but somehow familiar; it was like no wine I had ever drunk, and yet I had known that flavour all my life. I sniffed at the brim, and there rose a faint fragrance of thyme and heather honey and the sweet things of the moorland. I almost dropped it in my surprise; for here in this rude place I had stumbled upon that lost delicacy of the North, the heather ale.

For a second I was entranced with my discovery, and then the wonder of the cup claimed my attention. Was it a mere relic of pillage, or had this folk some hidden mine of the precious metal? Gold had once been common in these hills. There were the traces of mines on Cairnsmore; shepherds had found it in the gravel of the Gled Water; and the name of a house at the head of the Clachlands meant the "Home of Gold."

Once more I began my questions, and they answered them willingly. There and then I heard that secret for which many had died in old time, the secret of the heather ale. They told of the gold in the hills, of corries where the sand gleamed and abysses where the rocks were veined. All this they told me, freely, without a scruple. And then, like a clap, came the awful thought that this, too, spelled death. These were secrets which this race aforetime had guarded with their lives; they told them generously to me because there was no fear of betrayal. I should go no more out from this place.

The thought put me into a new sweat of terror—not at death, mind you, but at the unknown horrors which might precede

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the final suffering. I lay silent, and after binding my hands they began to leave me and go off to other parts of the cave. I dozed in the horrible half-swoon of fear, conscious only of my shaking limbs, and the great dull glow of the fire in the centre.

Then I became calmer. After all, they had treated me with tolerable kindness: I had spoken their language, which few of their victims could have done for many a century; it might be that I had found favour in their eyes.

For a little I comforted myself with this delusion, till I caught sight of a wooden box in a corner. It was of modern make, one such as grocers use to pack provisions in. It had some address nailed on it, and an aimless curiosity compelled me to creep thither and read it. A torn and weather-stained scrap of paper, with the nails at the corner rusty with age; but something of the address might still be made out. Amid the stains my feverish eyes read, "To Mr. M—, Carrickfey, by Allerfoot Station."

The ruined cottage in the hollow of the waste with the single gnarled apple-tree was before me in a twinkling. I remembered the shepherd's shrinking from the place and the name, and his wild eyes when he told me of the thing that had happened there. I seemed to see the old man in his moorland cottage, thinking no evil; and the sudden entry of the nameless things; and then the eyes glazed in unspeakable terror. I felt my lips dry and burning. Above me was the vault of rock; in the distance I saw the fire-glow and the shadows of shapes moving around it. My fright was too great for inaction, so I crept from the couch, and silently, stealthily, with tottering steps and bursting heart, I began to reconnoitre.

But I was still bound, my arms tightly, my legs more loosely, but yet firm enough to hinder flight. I could not get my hands at my leg-strap, still less could I undo the manacles. I rolled on the floor, seeking some sharp edge of rock, but all had been worn smooth by the use of centuries. Then suddenly an idea came upon me like an inspiration. The sounds from the fire seemed to have ceased, and I could hear them repeated from another and more distant part of the cave. The Folk had left their orgy around the blaze, and at the end of the long tunnel I saw its glow unimpeded upon the floor. Once there, I might burn off my fetters and be free once again to turn my thoughts to escape.

I CRAWLED a little way with much labour. Then suddenly I came abreast an opening in the wall, through which a path went. It was a long straight rock-cutting, and at the end I saw a gleam of pale light. It must be the open air; the way of escape was prepared for me; and with a prayer I made what speed I could towards the fire.

I rolled on the verge, but the fuel was peat, and the warm ashes would not burn the cords. In desperation I went farther, and my clothes began to singe, while my face ached beyond endurance. But yet I got no nearer my object. The strips of hide warped and cracked, but did not burn. Then in a last effort I thrust my wrists bodily into the glow and held them there. In an instant I drew them out with a groan of pain, scarred and sore, but to my joy the band had snapped in one place. Weak as I was, it was now easy to free myself, and then came the untying of my legs. My hands trembled, my eyes were dazed with hurry, and I was longer over the job than need have been. But at length I had loosed my cramped knees and stood on my feet, a free man once more.

I kicked off my boots, and fled noiselessly down the passage of the tunnel mouth. Apparently it was close on evening, for the white light had faded to a pale yellow. But it was daylight, and that was all I sought, and I ran for it as eagerly as ever runner ran to a goal. I came out on a rock-shelf, beneath which a moraine of boulders fell away in a chasm to a dark loch. It was all but night, but I could see the gnarled and fortressed rocks rise in ramparts above, and below the unknown screes and cliffs which make the side of the Muneraw a place only for foxes and the fowls of the air.

The first taste of liberty is an intoxication, and assuredly I was mad when I leaped down among the boulders. Happily at the top of the gully the stones were large and stable, else the noise would certainly have discovered me. Down I went, slipping, praying, my charred wrists aching, and my stockinged feet wet with blood. Soon I was in the jaws of the cleft, and a pale star rose before me. I have always been timid in the face of great rocks, and now, had not an awful terror been dogging my footsteps, no power on earth could have driven me to that descent. Soon I left the boulders behind, and came to long spouts of little stones, which moved with me till the hillside seemed

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sinking under my feet. Sometimes I was face downwards, once and again I must have fallen for yards. Had there been a cliff at the foot, I should have gone over it without resistance; but by the providence of God the spout ended in a long curve into the heather of the bog.

When I found my feet once more on soft boggy earth, my strength was renewed within me. A great hope of escape sprang up in my heart. For a second I looked back. There was a great line of shingle with the cliffs beyond, and above all the unknown blackness of the cleft. There lay my terror, and I set off running across the bog for dear life. My mind was clear enough to know my road. If I held round the loch in front I should come to a burn which fed the Farawa stream, on whose banks stood the sherherd's cottage. The loch could not be far; once at the Farawa I would have the light of the shieling clear before me.

Suddenly I heard behind me, as if coming from the hillside, the patter of feet. It was the sound which white hares make in the winter-time on a noiseless frosty day as they patter over the snow. I have heard the same soft noise from a herd of deer when they changed their pastures. Strange that so kindly a sound should put the very fear of death in my heart. I ran madly, blindly, yet thinking shrewdly. The loch was before me. Somewhere I had read or heard, I do not know where, that the brutish aboriginal races of the North could swim. I myself swam powerfully; could I but cross the loch I should save two miles of a desperate country.

THERE was no time to lose, for the patter was coming nearer, and I was almost at the loch's edge. I tore off my coat and rushed in. The bottom was mossy, and I had to struggle far before I found any depth. Something splashed in the water before me, and then something else a little behind. The thought that I was a mark for unknown missiles made me crazy with fright, and I struck fiercely out for the other shore. A gleam of moonlight was on the water at the burn's exit, and thither I guided myself. I found the thing difficult enough in itself, for my hands ached, and I was numb from my bonds. But my fancy raised a thousand phantoms to vex me.

Swimming in that black bog water, pursued by those nameless things, I seemed to be in a world of horror far removed from the kindly world of men. My strength seemed inexhaustible from my terror. Monsters at the bottom of the water seemed to bite at my feet, and the pain of my wrists made me believe that the loch was boiling hot, and that I was in some hellish place of torment.

I came out on a spit of gravel above the burn mouth, and set off down the ravine of the burn. It was a strait place, strewn with rocks; but now and then the hill turf came in stretches, and eased my wounded feet. Soon the fall became more abrupt, and I was slipping down a hillside, with the water on my left making great cascades in the granite. And then I was out in the wider vale where the Farawa water flowed among links of moss.

Far in front, a speck in the blue darkness, shone the light of the cottage. I panted forward, my breath coming in gasps and my back shot with fiery pains. Happily the land was easier for the feet as long as I kept on the skirts of the bog. My ears were sharp as a wild beast's with fear, as I listened for the noise of pursuit. Nothing came but the rustle of the gentlest hill-wind and the chatter of the falling streams.

Then suddenly the light began to waver and move athwart the window. I knew what it meant. In a minute or two the household at the cottage would retire to rest, and the lamp would be put out. True, I might find the place in the dark, for there was a moon of sorts and the road was not desperate. But somehow in that hour the lamplight gave a promise of safety which I clung to despairingly.

And then the last straw was added to my misery. Behind me came the pad of feet, the pat-patter, soft, eerie, incredibly swift. I choked with fear, and flung myself forward in a last effort. I give my word it was sheer mechanical shrinking that drove me on. God knows I would have lain down to die in the heather, had the things behind me been a common terror of life.

I ran as man never ran before, leaping hags, scrambling through green well-heads, straining towards the fast-dying light. A quarter of a mile and the patter sounded nearer. Soon I was not two hundred yards off, and the noise seemed almost at my elbow. The light went out, and the black mass of the cottage loomed in the dark.

Then, before I knew, I was at the door, battering it wearily and yelling for help. I heard steps within and a hand on the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

bolt. Then something shot past me with lightning force and buried itself in the wood. The dreadful hands were almost at my throat, when the door was opened and I stumbled in, hearing with a gulp of joy the key turn and the bar fall behind me.

CHAPTER III

IN TUAS MANUS, DOMINE!

MY BODY and senses slept, for I was utterly tired, but my brain all the night was on fire with horrid fancies. Again I was in that accursed cave; I was torturing my hands in the fire; I was slipping barefoot among jagged boulders; and then with bursting heart I was toiling the last mile with the cottage light—now grown to a great fire in the heavens—blazing before me.

It was broad daylight when I awoke, and I thanked God for the comfortable rays of the sun. I had been laid in a box-bed off the inner room, and my first sight was the shepherd sitting with folded arms in a chair regarding me solemnly. I rose and began to dress, feeling my legs and arms still tremble with weariness. The shepherd's sister bound up my scarred wrists and put an ointment on my burns; and, limping like an old man, I went into the kitchen.

I could eat little breakfast, for my throat seemed dry and narrow; but they gave me some brandy-and-milk, which put strength into my body. All the time the brother and sister sat in silence, regarding me with covert glances.

"Ye have been delivered from the jaws of the Pit," said the man at length. "See that," and he held out to me a thin shaft of flint. "I fand that in the door this morning."

I took it, let it drop, and stared vacantly at the window. My nerves had been too much tried to be roused by any new terror. Out of doors it was fair weather, flying gleams of April sunlight and the soft colours of spring. I felt dazed, isolated, cut off from my easy past and pleasing future, a companion of horrors and the sport of nameless things. Then suddenly my eye fell on my books heaped on a table, and the old distant civilization seemed for the moment inexpressibly dear.

"I must go—at once. And you must come too. You cannot stay here. I tell you it is death. If you knew what I know you would be crying out with fear. How far is it to Allermuir? Eight, fifteen miles; and then ten down Glen Aller to Allerfoot, and then the railway. We must go together while it is daylight, and perhaps we may be untouched. But quick, there is not a moment to lose." And I was on my shaky feet, and bustling among my possessions.

"I'll gang wi' ye to the station," said the shepherd, "for ye're clearly no fit to look after yourself. My sister will bide and keep the house. If naething has touched us this ten year, naething will touch us the day."

"But you cannot stay. You are mad," I began; but he cut me short with the words, "I trust in God."

"In any case let your sister come with us. I dare not think of a woman alone in the place."

"I'll bide," said she. "I'm no feared as lang as I'm indoors and there's steeks on the windies."

So I packed my few belongings as best I could, tumbled my books into a haversack, and, gripping the shepherd's arm nervously, crossed the threshold. The glen was full of sunlight. There lay the long shining links of the Farawa burn, the rough hills tumbled beyond, and far over all the scarred distant forehead of the Muneraw. I had always looked on moorland country as the freshest on earth—clean, wholesome, and homely. But now the fresh uplands seemed like a horrible pit. When I looked to the hills my breath choked in my throat, and the feel of soft heather below my feet set my heart trembling.

It was a slow journey to the inn at Allermiur. For one thing, no power on earth would draw me within sight of the shieling of Carrickfey, so we had to cross a shoulder of hill and make our way down a difficult glen, and then over a treacherous moss. The lochs were now gleaming like fretted silver; but to me, in my dreadful knowledge, they seemed more eerie than on that grey day when I came. At last my eyes were cheered by the sight of a meadow and a fence; then we were on a little byroad; and soon the fir-woods and corn-lands of Allercleuch were plain before us.

The shepherd came no farther, but with brief good-bye turned his solemn face hillwards. I hired a trap and a man to drive, and down the ten miles of Glen Aller I struggled to keep my thoughts from the past. I thought of the kindly South Country, of Oxford, of anything

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

comfortable and civilized. My driver pointed out the objects of interest as in duty bound, but his words fell on unheeding ears. At last he said something which roused me indeed to interest—the interest of a man who hears the word he fears most in the world. On the left side of the river there suddenly sprang into view a long gloomy cleft in the hills, with a vista of dark mountains behind, down which a stream of considerable size poured its waters.

"That is the Water o' Dule," said the man in a reverent voice. "A graund water to fish, but dangerous to life, for it's a' linns. Awa' at the heid they say there's a terrible wild place called the Scarts o' Muneraw—that's a shouther o' the muckle hill itsel' that ye see—but I've never been there, and I never kent ony man that had either."

AT THE station, which is a mile from the village of Allerfoot, I found I had some hours to wait on my train for the south. I dared not trust myself for one moment alone, so I hung about the goods-shed, talked vacantly to the porters, and when one went to the village for tea I accompanied him, and to his wonder entertained him at the inn. When I returned I found on the platform a stray bagman who was that evening going to London. If there is one class of men in the world which I heartily detest it is this but such was my state that I hailed him as a brother, and besought his company. I paid the difference for a first-class fare, and had him in the carriage with me. He must have thought me an amiable maniac, for I talked in fits and starts, and when he fell asleep I would wake him up and beseech him to speak to me. At wayside stations I would pull down the blinds in case of recognition, for to my unquiet mind the world seemed full of spies sent by that terrible Folk of the Hills. When the train crossed a stretch of moor I would lie down on the seat in case of shafts fired from the heather. And then at last with utter weariness I fell asleep, and woke screaming about midnight to find myself well down in the cheerful English midlands, and red blast-furnaces blinking by the railway-side.

In the morning I breakfasted in my rooms at St. Chad's with a dawning sense of safety. I was in a different and calmer world. The lawn-like quadrangles, the great trees, the cawing of rooks, and the homely twitter of sparrows—all seemed decent and settled and pleasing. Indoors the oak-panelled walls, the shelves of books, the pictures, the faint fragrance of tobacco, were very different from the gim-crack adornments and the accursed smell of peat and heather in that deplorable cottage.

It was still vacation-time, so most of my friends were down, but I spent the day hunting out the few cheerful pedants to whom term and vacation were the same. It delighted me to hear again their precise talk, to hear them make a boast of their work, and narrate the childish little accidents of their life. I yearned for the childish once more; I craved for women's drawing-rooms, and women's chatter, and everything which makes life an elegant game. God knows I had had enough of the other thing for a lifetime!

That night I shut myself in my rooms, barred my windows, drew my curtains, and made a great destruction. All books or pictures which recalled to me the moorlands were ruthlessly doomed. Novels, poems, treatises I flung into an old box, for sale to the second-hand bookseller. Some prints and water-colour sketches I tore to pieces with my own hands. I ransacked my fishing-book, and condemned all tackle for moorland waters to the flames. I wrote a letter to my solicitors, bidding them go no further in the purchase of a place in Lorn I had long been thinking of. Then, and not till then, did I feel the bondage of the past a little loosed from my shoulders. I made myself a nightcap of rum-punch instead of my usual whisky-toddy, that all associations with that dismal land might be forgotten, and to complete the renunciation I returned to cigars and flung my pipe into a drawer.

But when I woke in the morning I found that it is hard to get rid of memories. My feet were still sore and wounded, and when I felt my arms cramped and reflected on the causes, there was that black memory always near to vex me.

In a little term began, and my duties—as deputy-professor of Northern Antiquities—were once more clamorous. I can well believe that my hearers found my lectures strange, for instead of dealing with my favourite subjects and matters, which I might modestly say I had made my own, I confined myself to recondite and distant themes, treating even these cursorily and dully. For the truth is, my heart was no more in my subject. I hated—or I thought that I hated—all things Northern with the virulence of utter fear. My reading was

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

confined to science of the most recent kind, to abstruse philosophy, and to foreign classics. Anything which savoured of romance or mystery was abhorrent; I pined for sharp outlines and the tangibility of a high civilisation.

All the term I threw myself into the most frivolous life of the place. My Harrow schooldays seemed to have come back to me. I had once been a fair cricketer, so I played again for my college, and made decent scores. I coached an indifferent crew on the river. I fell into the slang of the place, which I had hitherto detested. My former friends looked on me askance, as if some freakish changeling had possessed me. Formerly I had been ready for pedantic discussion, I had been absorbed in my work, men had spoken of me as a rising scholar. Now I fled the very mention of things I had once delighted in. The Professor of Northern Antiquities, a scholar of European reputation, meeting me once in the Parks, embarked on an account of certain novel rings recently found in Scotland, and to his horror found that, when he had got well under weigh, I had slipped off unnoticed. I heard afterwards that the good old man was found by a friend walking disconsolately with bowed head in the middle of the High Street. Being rescued from among the horses' feet, he could only murmur, "I am thinking of Graves, poor man! And a year ago he was as sane as I am!"

BUT a man may not long deceive himself. I kept up the illusion valiantly for the term; but I felt instinctively that the fresh school-boy life, which seemed to me the extreme opposite to the ghoulish North, and as such the most desirable of things, was eternally cut off from me. No cunning affectation could ever dispel my real nature or efface the memory of a week. I realised miserably that sooner or later I must fight it out with my conscience. I began to call myself a coward. The chief thoughts of my mind began to centre themselves more and more round that unknown life waiting to be explored among the wilds.

One day I met a friend—an official in the British Museum—who was full of some new theory about primitive habitations. To me it seemed inconceivably absurd; but he was strong in his confidence, and without flaw in his evidence. The man irritated me, and I burned to prove him wrong, but I could think of no argument which was final against his. Then it flashed upon me that my own experience held the disproof; and without more words I left him, hot, angry with myself, and tantalised by the unattainable.

I might relate my *bona-fide* experience, but would men believe me? I must bring proofs, I must complete my researches, so as to make them incapable of disbelief. And there in those deserts was waiting the key. There lay the greatest discovery of the century—nay, of the millennium. There, too, lay the road to wealth such as I had never dreamed of. Could I succeed, I should be famous forever. I would revolutionise history and anthropology; I would show the world of men the pit whence they were digged and the rock whence they were hewn.

And then began a game of battledore between myself and my conscience.

"You are a coward," declared my conscience.

"I am sufficiently brave," I would answer. "I have seen things and yet lived. The terror is more than mortal, and I cannot face it."

"You are a coward," said my conscience.

"I am not bound to go there again. It would be purely for my own aggrandisement if I went, and not for any matter of duty."

"Nevertheless you are a coward," said my conscience.

"In any case the matter can wait."

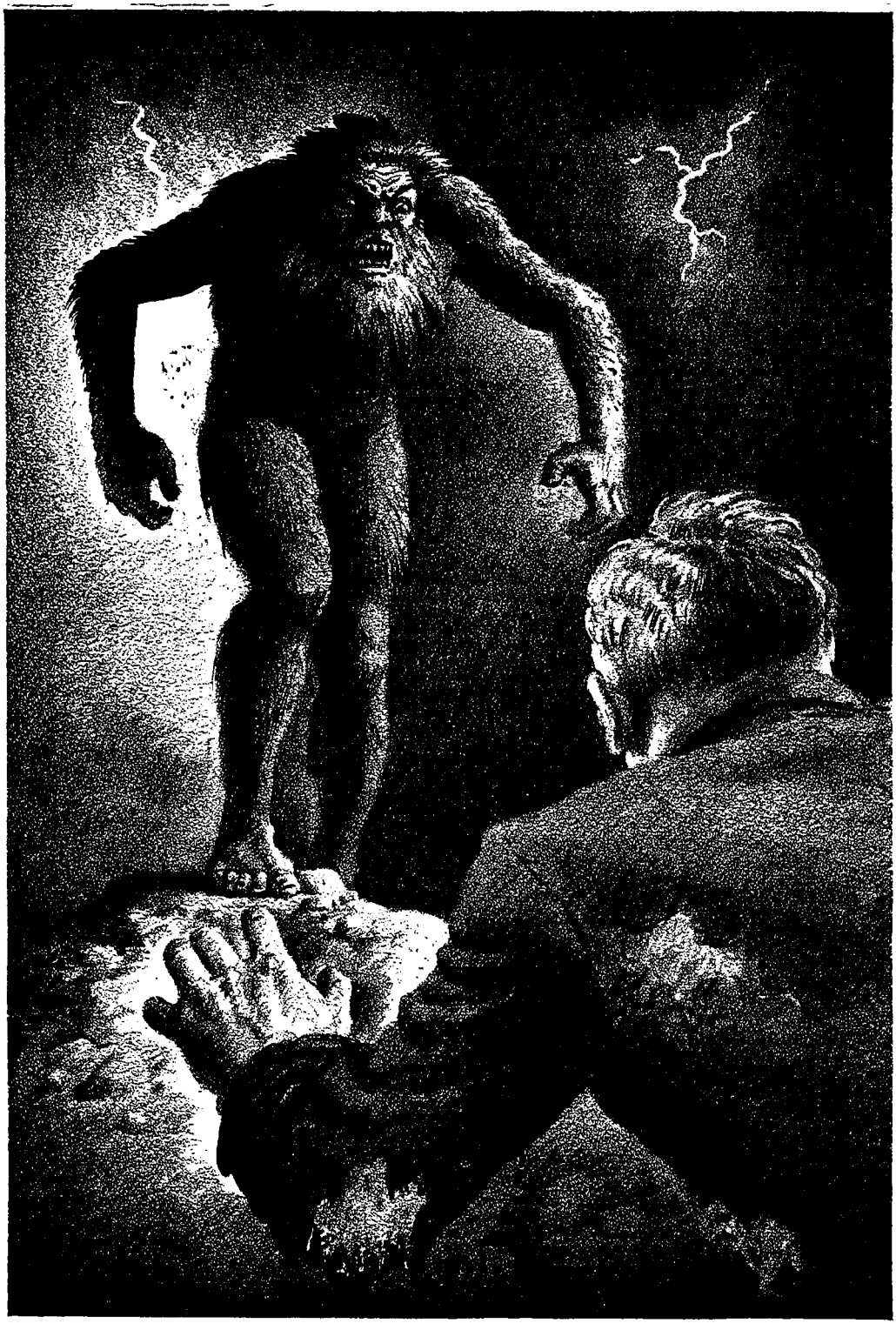
"You are a coward."

* * *

Then came one awful midsummer night, when I lay sleepless and fought the thing out with myself. I knew that the strife was hopeless, that I should have no peace in this world again unless I made the attempt. The dawn was breaking when I came to the final resolution; and when I rose and looked at my face in a mirror, lo! it was white and lined and drawn like that of a man of sixty.

The next morning I packed a bag with some changes of clothing and a collection of notebooks, and went up to town. The first thing I did was to pay a visit to my solicitors. "I am about to travel," said I, "and I wish to have all things settled in case any accident should happen to me." So I arranged for the disposal of my property in case of death, and added a codicil which puzzled the lawyers. If I did not return within six months, communications were to be entered into with the shepherd at the shieling of Farawa—post-town Allerfoot. If

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



When I saw its eyes I knew the purpose of fighting. . . .

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

he could produce any papers, they were to be put into the hands of certain friends, published, and the cost charged to my estate. From my solicitors I went to a gun-maker's in Regent Street and bought an ordinary six-chambered revolver, feeling much as a man must feel who proposed to cross the Atlantic in a skiff and purchased a small life-belt as a precaution.

I took the night express to the North, and, for a marvel, I slept. When I awoke about four we were on the verge of Westmoreland, and stony hills blocked the horizon. At first I hailed the mountain-land gladly; sleep for the moment had caused forgetfulness of my terrors. But soon a turn of the line brought me in full view of a heathery moor, running far to a confusion of distant peaks. I remembered my mission and my fate, and if ever condemned criminal felt a more bitter regret I pity his case. Why should I alone among the millions of this happy isle be singled out as the repository of a ghastly secret, and be cursed by a conscience which would not let it rest?

I came to Allerfoot early in the forenoon, and got a trap to drive me up the valley. It was a lowering grey day, hot and yet sunless. A sort of heat-haze cloaked the hills, and every now and then a smurr of rain would meet us on the road, and in a minute be over. I felt wretchedly dispirited; and when at last the white-washed kirk of Allermuir came into sight and the broken-backed bridge of Aller, man's eyes seemed to have looked on no drearier scene since time began.

I ate what meal I could get, for, fears or no, I was voraciously hungry. Then I asked the landlord to find me some man who would show me the road to Farawa. I demanded company, not for protection—for what could two men do against such brutish strength?—but to keep my mind from its own thoughts.

The man looked at me anxiously.

"Are ye acquaint wi' the folks, then?"

I said I was, that I had often stayed in the cottage.

"Ye ken that they've a name for being strange. The man never comes here forbye once or twice a-year, and he has few dealings wi' other herds. He's got an ill name, too, for losing sheep. I dinna like the country ava. Up by yon Muneraw—no that I've ever been there, but I've seen it afar off—is enough to put a man daft for the rest o' his days. What's taking ye thereaways? It's no the time for the fishing?"

I told him that I was a botanist going to explore certain hill-crevices for rare ferns. He shook his head, and then after some delay found me an ostler who would accompany me to the cottage.

The man was a shock-headed, long-limbed fellow, with fierce red hair and a humorous eye. He talked sociably about his life, answered my hasty questions with deftness, and beguiled me for the moment out of myself. I passed the melancholy lochs, and came in sight of the great stony hills without the trepidation I had expected. Here at my side was one who found some humour even in those uplands. But one thing I noted which brought back the old uneasiness. He took the road which led us farthest from Carrickfey, and when to try him I proposed the other, he vetoed it with emphasis.

After this his good spirits departed, and he grew distrustful.

"What mak's ye a freend o' the herd at Farawa?" he demanded of me a dozen times.

Finally, I asked him if he knew the man, and had seen him lately.

"I dinna ken him, and I hadna seen him for years till a fortnicht syne, when a' Allermuir saw him. He cam doun one afternoon to the public-hoose, and begood to drink. He had aye been kenned for a terrible godly kind o' a man, so ye may believe folk wondered at this. But when he had stuck to the drink for twae days, and filled himsel' blind-fou half-a-dozen o' times, he took a fit o' repentance, and raved and blethered about siccan a life as he led in the muirs. There was some said he was speakin' serious, but maist thocht it was juist daftness."

"And what did he speak about?" I asked sharply.

"I canna verra weel tell ye! It was about some kind o' bogle that lived in the Muneraw—that's the shouthers o't ye see yonder—and it seems that the bogle killed his sheep and frichted himsel'. He was aye bletherin', too, about something or somebody ca'd Grave; but oh! the man wasna wise." And my companion shook a contemptuous head.

And then below us in the valley we saw the shieling, with a thin shaft of smoke rising into the rainy grey weather. The man left me, sturdily refusing any fee. "I wantit my legs stretched as weel as you. A walk in the hills is neither here nor there to a stoot man. When will ye be back, sir?"

The question was well-timed. "To-mor-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

row fortnight," I said, "and I want somebody from Allermuir to come out here in the morning and carry some baggage. Will you see to that?"

He said "Ay," and went off, while I scrambled down the hill to the cottage. Nervousness possessed me, and though it was broad daylight and the whole place lay plain before me, I ran pell-mell, and did not stop till I reached the door.

The place was utterly empty. Unmade beds, unwashed dishes, a hearth strewn with the ashes of peat, and dust on everything, proclaimed the absence of inmates. I began to be horribly frightened. Had the shepherd and his sister, also, disappeared? Was I left alone in this bleak place, with a dozen lonely miles between me and human dwellings? I could not return alone; better this horrible place than the unknown perils of the out-of-doors. Hastily I barricaded the door, and to the best of my power shuttered the windows; and then with dreary forebodings I sat down to wait on fortune.

IN A LITTLE I heard a long swinging step outside and the sound of dogs. Joyfully I opened the latch, and there was the shepherd's grim face waiting stolidly on what might appear.

At the sight of me he stepped back. "What in the Lord's name are ye daein' here?" he asked. "Didna ye get enough afore?"

"Come in," I said, sharply. "I want to talk."

In he came with those blessed dogs—what a comfort it was to look on their great honest faces! He sat down on the untidy bed and waited.

"I came because I could not stay away. I saw too much to give me any peace elsewhere. I must go back, even though I risk my life for it. The cause of scholarship demands it as well as the cause of humanity."

"Is that a' the news ye hae?" he said. "Weel, I've mair to tell ye. Three weeks syne my sister Margit was lost, and I've never seen her mair."

My jaw fell, and I could only stare at him.

"I cam hame from the hill at nightfa' and she was gone. I lookit for her up hill and doun, but I couldna find her. Syne I think I went daft. I went to the Scarts and huntit them up and doun, but so sign could I see. The Folk can bide quiet enough when they want. Syne I went to Allermuir and drank mysel' blind—me, that's a God-fearing man and a saved soul; but the Lord help me, I didna ken what I was at. That's my news, and day and night I wander thae hills, seekin' for what I canna find."

"But, man, are you mad?" I cried. "Surely there are neighbours to help you. There is a law in the land, and you had only to find the nearest police-office and compel them to assist you."

"What guid can man dae?" he asked. "An army o' sodgers couldna find that hidy-hole. Forby, when I went to Allermuir wi' my story the folk thocht me daft. It was that set me drinking, for—the Lord forgive me!—I wasna my ain maister. I threepit till I was hairse, but the bodies just lauch'd." And he lay back on the bed like a man mortally tired.

Grim though the tidings were, I can only say that my chief feeling was of comfort. Pity for the new tragedy had swallowed up my fear. I had now a purpose, and a purpose, too, not of curiosity but of mercy.

"I go to-morrow morning to the Muneraw. But first I want to give you something to do." And I drew roughly a chart of the place on the back of a letter. "Go into Allermuir to-morrow, and give this paper to the landlord at the inn. The letter will tell him what to do. He is to raise at once all the men he can get, and come to the place on the chart marked with a cross. Tell him life depends on his hurry."

The shepherd nodded. "D'ye ken the Folk are watching for you? They let me pass without trouble, for they've nae use for me, but I see fine they're seeking you. Ye'll no gang half a mile the morn afore they grip ye."

"So much the better," I said. "That will take me quicker to the place I want to be at."

"And I'm to gang to Allermuir the morn," he repeated, with the air of a child conning a lesson. "But what if they'll no believe me?"

"They'll believe the letter."

"Maybe," he said, and relapsed into a doze.

I set myself to put that house in order, to rouse the fire, and prepare some food. It was dismal work; and meantime outside the night darkened, and a great wind rose, which howled round the walls and lashed the rain on the windows.

I HAD not gone twenty yards from the cottage door ere I knew I was watched. I had left the shepherd still dozing, in the half-conscious state of a dazed and

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

broken man. All night the wind had wakened me at intervals, and now in the half-light of morn the weather seemed more vicious than ever. The wind cut my ears, the whole firmament was full of the rending and thunders of the storm. Rain fell in blinding sheets, the heath was a marsh, and it was the most I could do to struggle against the hurricane which stopped my breath. And all the while I knew I was not alone in the desert.

All men know—in imagination or in experience—the sensation of being spied on. The nerves tingle, the skin grows hot and prickly, and there is a queer sinking of the heart. Intensify this common feeling a hundredfold, and you get a tenth part of what I suffered. I am telling a plain tale, and record bare physical facts. My lips stood out from my teeth as I heard, or felt, a rustle in the heather, a scraping among stones. Some subtle magnetic link seemed established between my body and the mysterious world around. I became sick—acutely sick—with the ceaseless apprehension.

My fright became so complete that when I turned a corner of rock, or stepped in deep heather, I seemed to feel a body rub against mine. This continued all the way up the Farawa water, and then up its feeder to the little lonely loch. It kept me from looking forward; but it likewise kept me in such a sweat of fright that I was ready to faint. Then the notion came upon me to test this fancy of mine. If I was tracked thus closely, clearly the trackers would bar my way if I turned back. So I wheeled round and walked a dozen paces down the glen.

Nothing stopped me. I was about to turn again, when something made me take six more paces. At the fourth something rustled in the heather, and my neck was gripped as in a vise. I had already made up my mind on what I would do. I would be perfectly still, I would conquer my fear, and let them do as they pleased with me so long as they took me to their dwelling. But at the touch of the hands my resolution fled. I struggled and screamed. Then something was clapped on my mouth, speech and strength went from me, and once more I was back in the maudlin childhood of terror.

* * *

In the cave it was always a dusky twilight. I seemed to be lying in the same place, with the same dull glare of firelight far off, and the same close stupefying smell. One of the creatures was standing silently by my side, and I asked him some trivial question. He turned and shambled down the passage, leaving me alone.

Then he returned with another, and they talked their guttural talk to me. I scarcely listened till I remembered that in a sense I was here of my own accord, and on a definite mission. The purport of their speech seemed to be that, now I had returned, I must beware of a second flight. Once I had been spared; a second time I should be killed without mercy.

I assented gladly. The Folk, then, had some use for me. I felt my errand prospering.

Then the old creature which I had seen before crept out of some corner and squatted beside me. He put a claw on my shoulder, a horrible, corrugated, skeleton thing, hairy to the finger-tips and nailless. He grinned, too, with toothless gums, and his hideous old voice was like a file on sandstone.

I asked questions, but he would only grin and jabber, looking now and then furtively over his shoulder towards the fire.

I coaxed and humoured him, till he launched into a narrative of which I could make nothing. It seemed a mere string of names, with certain words repeated at fixed intervals. Then it flashed on me that this might be a religious incantation. I had discovered remnants of a ritual and a mythology among them. It was possible that these were sacred days, and that I had stumbled upon some rude celebration.

I caught a word or two and repeated them. He looked at me curiously. Then I asked him some leading question, and he replied with clearness. My guess was right. The midsummer week was the holy season of the year, when sacrifices were offered to the gods.

The notion of sacrifices disquieted me, and I would fain have asked further. But the creature would speak no more. He hobbled off, and left me alone in the rock-chamber to listen to a strange sound which hung ceaselessly about me. It must be the storm without, like a park of artillery rattling among the crags. A storm of storms, surely, for the place echoed and hummed, and to my unquiet eye the very rock of the roof seemed to shake!

Apparently my existence was forgotten, for I lay long before any one returned. Then it was merely one who brought food, the same strange meal as before, and left me hastily. When I had eaten I rose and

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

stretched myself. My hands and knees still quivered nervously; but I was strong and perfectly well in body. The empty, desolate, tomb-like place was eerie enough to scare any one; but its emptiness was comfort when I thought of its inmates. Then I wandered down the passage towards the fire which was burning in loneliness. Where had the Folk gone?

Suddenly sounds began to break on my ear, coming from some inner chamber at the end of that in which the fire burned. I could scarcely see for the smoke; but I began to make my way towards the noise, feeling along the sides of rock. Then a second gleam of light seemed to rise before me, and I came to an aperture in the wall which gave entrance to another room.

This in turn was full of smoke and glow —a murky orange glow, as if from some strange flame of roots. There were the squat moving figures, running in wild antics round the fire. I crouched in the entrance, terrified and yet curious, till I saw something beyond the blaze which held me dumb. Apart from the others and tied to some stake in the wall was a woman's figure, and the face was the face of the shepherd's sister.

My first impulse was flight. I must get away and think—plan, achieve some desperate way of escape. I sped back to the silent chamber as if the gang were at my heels. It was still empty, and I stood helplessly in the centre, looking at the impassable walls of rock as a wearied beast may look at the walls of its cage. I bethought me of the way I had escaped before and rushed thither, only to find it blocked by a huge contrivance of stone. Yards and yards of solid rocks were between me and the upper air, and yet through it all came the crash and whistle of the storm. If I were at my wits' end in this inner darkness, there was also high commotion among the powers of the air in that upper world.

As I stood I heard the soft steps of my tormentors. They seemed to think I was meditating escape, for they flung themselves on me and bore me to the ground. I did not struggle, and when they saw me quiet, they squatted round and began to speak. They told me of the holy season and its sacrifices. At first I could not follow them; then when I caught familiar words I found some clue, and they became intelligible. They spoke of a woman, and I asked, "What woman?" With all frankness they told me of the custom which prevailed—how every twentieth summer a woman was sacrificed to some devilish god, and by the hand of one of the stranger race. I said nothing, but my whitening face must have told them a tale, though I strove hard to keep my composure. I asked if they had found the victim. "She is in this place," they said; "and as for the man, thou art he." And with this they left me.

I still had some hours; so much I gathered from their talk, for the sacrifice was at sunset. Escape was cut off forever. I have always been something of a fatalist, and at the prospect of the irrevocable end my cheerfulness returned. I had my pistol, for they had taken nothing from me. I took out the little weapon and fingered it lovingly. Hope of the lost, refuge of the vanquished, ease to the coward—blessed be he who first conceived it!

The time dragged on, the minutes grew to hours, and still I was left solitary. Only the mad violence of the storm broke the quiet. It had increased in fury, for the stones at the mouth of the exit by which I had formerly escaped seemed to rock with some external pressure, and cutting shafts of wind slipped past and cleft the heat of the passage. What a sight the ravine outside must be, I thought, set in the forehead of a great hill, and swept clean by every breeze! Then came a crashing, and the long hollow echo of a fall. The rocks are splitting, said I; the road down the corrie will be impassable now and for evermore.

I began to grow weak with the nervousness of the waiting, and by-and-by I lay down and fell into a sort of doze. When I next knew consciousness I was being roused by two of the Folk, and bidden get ready. I stumbled to my feet, felt for the pistol in the hollow of my sleeve, and prepared to follow.

WHEN we came out into the wider chamber the noise of the storm was deafening. The roof rang like a shield which has been struck. I noticed, perturbed as I was, that my guards cast anxious eyes around them, alarmed, like myself, at the murderous din. Nor was the world quieter when we entered the last chamber, where the fire brand burned and the remnant of the Folk waited. Wind had found an entrance from somewhere or other, and the flames blew here and there, and the smoke gyrated in odd circles. At the back, and apart from the rest, I saw the dazed eyes and the white old drawn face of the woman.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

They led me up beside her to a place where there was a rude flat stone, hollowed in the centre, and on it a rusty iron knife, which seemed once to have formed part of a scythe-blade. Then I saw the ceremonial which was marked out for me. It was the very rite which I had dimly figured as current among a rude people, and even in that moment of horror I had something of the curious scholar's satisfaction.

The oldest of the Folk, who seemed to be a sort of priest, came to my side and mumbled a form of words. His fetid breath sickened me; his dull eyes, glassy like a brute's with rage, brought my knees together. He put the knife in my hands, dragged the terror-stricken woman forward to the altar, and bade me begin.

I began by sawing her bonds through. When she felt herself free she would have fled back, but stopped when I bade her. At that moment there came a noise of rending and crashing as if the hills were falling, and for one second the eyes of the Folk were averted from the frustrated sacrifice.

Only for a moment. The next they saw what I had done, and with one impulse rushed towards me. Then began the last scene in the play. I sent a bullet through the right eye of the first thing that came on. The second went wide; but the third shattered the hand of an elderly ruffian with a club. Never for an instant did they stop, and now they were clutching at me. I pushed the woman behind, and fired three rapid shots in blind panic, and then, clutching the scythe, I struck right and left like a madman.

Suddenly I saw the foreground sink before my eyes. The roof sloped down, and with a sickening hiss a mountain of rock and earth seemed to precipitate itself on the foremost of my assailants. One, nipped in the middle by a rock, caught my eye by his hideous writhings. Two only remained in what was now a little suffocating chamber, with embers from the fire still smoking on the floor.

The woman caught me by the hand and drew me with her, while the two seemed mute with fear. "There's a road at the back," she screamed. "I ken it. I fand it out." And she pulled me up a narrow hole in the rock.

* * *

How long we climbed I do not know. We were both fighting for air, with the tightness of throat and chest, and the craziness of limb which mean suffocation. I cannot tell when we first came to the surface, but I remember the woman, who seemed to have the strength of extreme terror, pulling me from the edge of a crevasse and laying me on a flat rock. It seemed to be the depth of winter, with sheer-falling rain and a wind that shook the hills.

Then I was once more myself and could look about me. From my feet yawned a sheer abyss, where once had been a hill-shoulder. Some great mass of rock on the brow of the mountain had been loosened by the storm, and in its fall had caught the lips of the ravine and blocked the upper outlet from the nest of dwellings. For a moment I feared that all had been destroyed.

My feeling—Heaven help me!—was not thankfulness for God's mercy and my escape, but a bitter mad regret. I rushed frantically to the edge, and when I saw only the blackness of darkness I wept tears. All the time the storm was tearing at my body, and I had to grip hard by hand and foot to keep my place.

Suddenly on the brink of the ravine I saw a third figure. We two were not the only fugitives. One of the Folk had escaped.

I ran to it, and to my surprise the thing as soon as it saw me rushed to meet me. At first I thought it was with some instinct of self-preservation, but when I saw its eyes I knew the purpose of fight. Clearly one or other should go no more from the place.

We were some ten yards from the brink when I grappled with it. Dimly I heard the woman scream with fright, and saw her scramble across the hillside. Then we were tugging in a death-throe, the hideous smell of the thing in my face, its red eyes burning into mine, and its hoarse voice muttering. Its strength seemed incredible; but I, too, am no weakling. We tugged and strained, its nails biting into my flesh, while I choked its throat unsparingly. Every second I dreaded lest we should plunge together over the ledge, for it was thither my adversary tried to draw me. I caught my heel in a nick of rock, and pulled madly against it.

And then, while I was beginning to glory with the pride of conquest, my hope was dashed in pieces. The thing seemed to break from my arms, and, as if in despair, cast itself headlong into the impenetrable darkness. I stumbled blindly after it, saved myself on the brink, and fell back, sick and ill, into a merciful swoon.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CHAPTER IV

NOTE IN CONCLUSION BY THE EDITOR

AT THIS point the narrative of my unfortunate friend, Mr. Graves of St. Chad's, breaks off abruptly. He wrote it shortly before his death, and was prevented from completing it by the attack of heart failure which carried him off.

In accordance with the instructions in his will, I have prepared it for publication, and now in much fear and hesitation give it to the world. First, however, I must supplement it by such facts as fall within my knowledge.

The shepherd seems to have gone to Allermuir and by the help of the letter convinced the inhabitants. A body of men was collected under the landlord, and during the afternoon set out for the hills. But unfortunately the great midsummer storm—the most terrible of recent climatic disturbances—had filled the mosses and streams, and they found themselves unable to proceed by any direct road. Ultimately, late in the evening, they arrived at the cottage of Farawa, only to find there a raving woman, the shepherd's sister, who seemed crazy with brain-fever. She told some rambling story about her escape, but her narrative said nothing of Mr. Graves. So they treated her with what skill they possessed, and sheltered for the night in and around the cottage of the shepherd.

Next morning the storm had abated a little, and the woman had recovered something of her wits. From her they learned that Mr. Graves was lying in a ravine on the side of the Muneraw in imminent danger of his life. A body set out to find him; but so immense was the landslide, and so dangerous the whole mountain, that it was nearly evening when they recovered him from the perilous ledge of rock.

He was alive, but unconscious, and on bringing him back to the cottage it was clear that he was, indeed, very ill. There he lay for three months, while the best skill that could be got was procured for him.

By dint of an uncommon toughness of constitution he survived; but it was an old and feeble man who returned to Oxford in the early winter.

The shepherd and his sister immediately left the countryside, and were never more heard of, unless they are the pair of unfortunates who are at present in a Scottish pauper asylum, incapable of remembering even their names. The people who last spoke with them declared that their minds seemed weakened by a great shock, and that it was hopeless to try to get from them any connected or rational statement.

The career of my poor friend from that hour was little short of a tragedy. He awoke from his illness to find the world incredulous; even the country-folk of

(Continued on page 129)

ASTOUNDING! TERRIFYING! EXCITING! SUPERNATURAL!

IN THE FIRST ISSUE—
A. MERRITT'S EPIC NOVEL
OF FANTASY

CREEP, SHADOW!

Tells a tale told many times—that may be told again—pitting modern science against ancient sorcery.

Also, Robert Arthur's thriller of FOOTSTEPS INVISIBLE that shuffle through the ages.

December Issue on Sale Nov. 4th

A. MERRITT'S FANTASY
CELEBRATED CLASSICS OF FANTASY
25¢
MAGAZINE

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

They could feel and hear the Nameless Horror, but they could not see it. . . . They could have no doubt that it was present among them, but . . .

WHAT WAS IT?

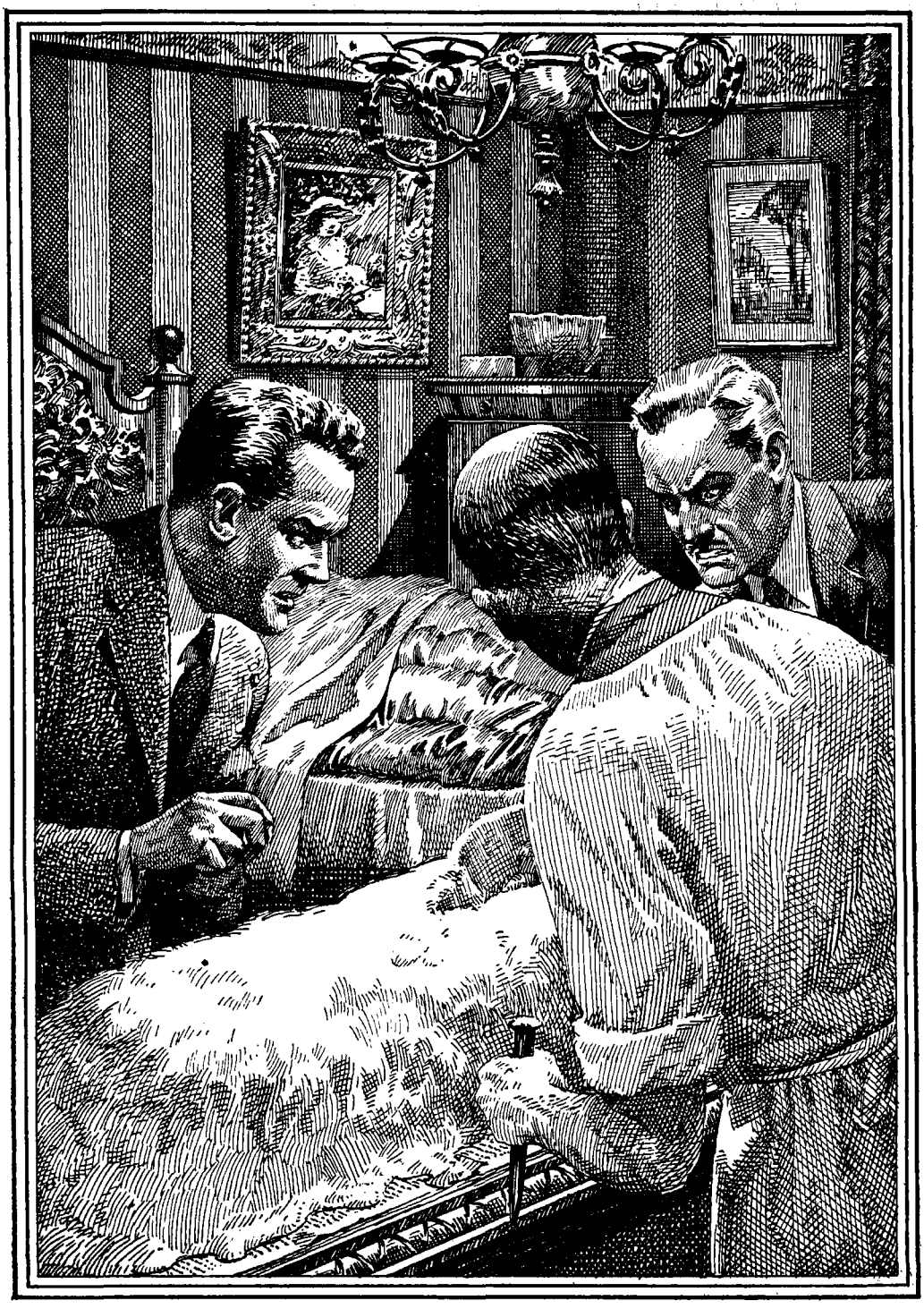
By Fitz-James O'Brien

IT IS, I confess, with considerable diffidence that I approach the strange narrative which I am about to relate. The events which I purpose detailing are of so extraordinary a character that I am quite prepared to meet with an unusual amount of incredulity and scorn. I accept all such beforehand. I have, I trust, the literary courage to face unbelief. I have, after mature consideration, resolved to narrate, in as simple and straightforward a manner as I can compass, some facts that passed under my observation, in the month of July last, and which, in the annals of the mysteries of physical science, are wholly unparalleled.

I live at No.— Twenty-sixth Street, in New York. The house is in some respects a curious one. It has enjoyed for the last two years the reputation of being haunted. The house is very spacious. A hall of noble size leads to a large spiral staircase winding through its centre, while the various apartments are of imposing dimensions. It was built some fifteen or twenty years since by Mr. A——, the well-known New York merchant, who five years ago threw the commercial world into convulsions by a stupendous bank fraud. Mr. A——, as every one knows, escaped to Europe, and died not long after, of a broken heart. Almost immediately after the news of his decease reached this country and was verified, the report spread in Twenty-sixth Street that No.— was haunted. Legal measures had dispossessed the widow of its former owner, and it was inhabited merely by a care-taker and his wife, placed there by the house-agent into whose hands it had passed for purposes of renting or sale. These people declared that they were troubled by unnatural noises. Doors were opened without any visible agency. The remnants of furniture scattered through the various rooms were, during the night, piled one upon the other by unknown hands. Invisible feet passed up and down the stairs in broad daylight, accompanied by the rustle of unseen silk dresses, and the gliding of invisible hands along the massive balusters. The care-taker and wife declared they would live there no longer. The house-agent laughed, dismissed them, and put others in their place. The noises and supernatural manifestations continued. The neighborhood caught up the story, and the house remained untenanted for three years. Several persons negotiated for it—but, somehow, always before the bargain was closed they heard the unpleasant rumors and declined to treat any further.

It was in this state of things that my landlady, who at that time kept a boarding-house in Bleecker Street, and who wished to move farther up town, conceived the bold idea of Renting No.— Twenty-sixth Street. Happening to have in her house rather a plucky and philosophical set of boarders, she laid her scheme before

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



In five minutes we had a plaster mold
on the creature. . . .

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

us, stating candidly everything she had heard respecting the ghostly qualities of the establishment to which she wished to remove us. With the exception of two timid persons—a sea-captain and a returned Californian, who immediately gave notice that they would leave—all of Mrs. Moffat's guests declared that they would accompany her in her incursion into the abode of spirits.

Our removal was affected in the month of May, and we were charmed with our new residence.

Of course we had no sooner established ourselves at No.— than we began to expect the ghosts. We absolutely awaited their advent with eagerness. Our dinner conversations were supernatural. I found myself a person of immense importance, it having leaked out that I was tolerably well versed in the history of supernaturalism, and had once written a story the foundation of which was a ghost. If a table or wainscot panel happened to warp when we were assembled in the large drawing-room, there was an instant silence, and every one was prepared for an immediate clanking of chains and a spectral form.

After a month of psychological excitement, it was with the utmost dissatisfaction that we were forced to acknowledge that nothing in the remotest degree approaching the supernatural had manifested itself.

Things were in this state when an incident took place so awful and inexplicable that my reason fairly reels at the bare memory of the occurrence. It was the tenth of July. After dinner was over I repaired, with my friend Dr. Hammond, to the garden to smoke my evening pipe. Independent of certain mental sympathies which existed between the doctor and myself, we were linked together by a vice. We both smoked opium. We knew each other's secret and respected it. We enjoyed together that wonderful expansion of thought, that marvellous intensifying of the perceptive faculties, that boundless feeling of existence when we seem to have points of contact with the whole universe —in short, that unimaginable spiritual bliss, which I would not surrender for a throne, and which I hope you, reader, will never, never taste.

ON THE evening in question, the tenth of July, the doctor and myself drifted into an unusually metaphysical mood. We lit our large meerschaums, filled with fine Turkish tobacco, in the core of which burned a little black nut of opium, that, like the nut in the fairy tale, held within its narrow limits wonders beyond the reach of kings; we paced to and fro, conversing. A strange perversity dominated the currents of our thoughts. They would not flow through the sun-lit channels into which we strove to divert them. For some unaccountable reason, they constantly diverged into dark and lonesome beds, where a continual gloom brooded.

It was in vain that, after our old fashion, we flung ourselves on the shores of the East, and talked of its gay bazaars, of the splendors of the time of Haroun, of harems and golden palaces. Black afreets continually arose from the depths of our talk, and expanded, like the one the fisherman released from the copper vessel, until they blotted everything bright from our vision. Insensibly, we yielded to the occult force that swayed us, and indulged in gloomy speculation. We had talked some time upon the proneness of the human mind to mysticism, and the almost universal love of the terrible, when Hammond suddenly said to me, "What do you consider to be the greatest element of terror?"

The question puzzled me. That many things were terrible I knew. But it now struck me, for the first time, that there must be one great and ruling embodiment of fear—a King of Terrors, to which all others must succumb. What might it be? To what train of circumstances would it owe its existence?

"I confess, Hammond," I replied to my friend, "I never considered the subject before. That there must be one Something more terrible than any other thing, I feel. I cannot attempt, however, even the most vague definition."

"I am somewhat like you, Harry," he answered. "I feel my capacity to experience a terror greater than anything yet conceived by the human mind—something combining in fearful and unnatural amalgamation hitherto supposed incompatible elements. The calling of the voices in Brockden Brown's novel of 'Wieland' is awful; so is the picture of the Dweller on the Threshold, in Bulwer's 'Zanoni'; but," he added, shaking his head gloomily, "there is something more horrible still than these."

"Look here, Hammond," I rejoined, "let us drop this kind of talk, for Heaven's sake! We shall suffer for it, depend on it."

"I don't know what's the matter with

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

me tonight," he replied, "but my brain is running upon all sorts of weird and awful thoughts. I feel as if I could write a story like Hoffman, tonight, if I were only master of a literary style."

"Well, if we are going to be Hoffmanesque in our talk, I'm off to bed. Opium and nightmares should never be brought together. How sultry it is! Good-night, Hammond."

"Good-night, Harry. Pleasant dreams to you."

"To you, gloomy wretch, afreets, ghouls, and enchanters."

We parted, and each sought his respective chamber. I undressed quickly and got into bed, taking with me, according to my usual custom, a book over which I generally read myself to sleep. I opened the volume as soon as I had laid my head upon the pillow, and instantly flung it to the other side of the room. It was Goudons' "History of Monsters"—a curious French work which I had lately imported from Paris, but which, in the state of mind I had then reached, was anything but an agreeable companion. I resolved to go to sleep at once; so, turning down my gas until nothing but a little blue point of light glimmered on the top of the tube, I composed myself to rest.

The room was in total darkness. The atom of gas that still remained alight did not illuminate a distance of three inches around the burner. I desperately drew my arm across my eyes, as if to shut out even the darkness, and tried to think of nothing. It was in vain. The confounded themes touched on by Hammond in the garden kept obtruding themselves on my brain. I battled against them. I erected ramparts of would-be blankness of intellect to keep them out. They still crowded upon me.

While I was lying still as a corpse, hoping that by a perfect physical inaction I should hasten mental repose, an awful incident occurred. A Something dropped, as it seemed, from the ceiling, plumb upon my chest, and the next instant I felt two bony hands encircling my throat, endeavoring to choke me.

I am no coward, and am possessed of considerable physical strength. The suddenness of the attack, instead of stunning me, strung every nerve to its highest tension. My body acted from instinct, before my brain had time to realize the terrors of my position. In an instant I wound two muscular arms around the creature, and squeezed it, with all the strength of my despair, against my chest. In a few seconds the bony hands that had fastened on my throat loosened their hold, and I was free to breathe once more.

Then commenced a struggle of awful intensity.

Immersed in the most profound darkness, totally ignorant of the nature of the Thing by which I was so suddenly attacked, finding my grasp slipping every moment, by reason, it seemed to me, of the entire nakedness of my assailant, bitten with sharp teeth in the shoulder, neck, and chest, having every moment to protect my throat against a pair of sinewy, agile hands, which my utmost efforts could not confine—these were a combination of circumstances to combat which required all the strength, skill and courage that I possessed.

AT LAST, after a silent, deadly, exhausting struggle, I got my assailant under by a series of incredible efforts of strength. Once pinned, with my knee on what I made out to be its chest, I knew that I was victor. I rested for a moment to breathe. I heard the creature beneath me panting in the darkness, and felt the violent throbbing of a heart. It was apparently as exhausted as I was; that was one comfort. At this moment I remembered that I usually placed under my pillow, before going to bed, a large yellow silk pocket-handkerchief. I felt for it instantly; it was there. In a few seconds more I had, after a fashion, pinioned the creature's arms.

I now felt tolerably secure. There was nothing more to be done but to turn on the gas, and, having first seen what my midnight assailant was like, arouse the household. I will confess to being actuated by a certain pride in not giving the alarm before; I wished to make the capture alone and unaided.

Never losing my hold for an instant, I slipped from the bed to the floor, dragging my captive with me. I had but a few steps to make to reach the gas-burner; these I made with the greatest caution, holding the creature in a grip like a vise. At last I got within arm's length of the tiny speck of blue light which told me where the gas-burner lay. Quick as lightning I released my grasp with one hand and let on the full flood of light. Then I turned to look at my captive.

I cannot even attempt to give any definition of my sensations the instant after I turned on the gas. I suppose I must have shrieked with terror, for in less than a

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

minute afterward my room was crowded with the inmates of the house. I shudder now as I think of that awful moment. *I saw nothing!*

Yes, I had one arm firmly clasped around a breathing, panting, corporeal shape, my other hand gripped with all its strength a throat as warm, and apparently fleshly, as my own; and yet, with this living substance in my grasp, with its body pressed against my own, and all in the bright glare of a large jet of gas, I absolutely beheld nothing! Not even an outline—a vapor!

I do not, even at this hour, realize the situation in which I found myself. I cannot recall the astounding incident thoroughly. Imagination in vain tries to compass the awful paradox.

It breathed. I felt its warm breath upon my cheek. It struggled fiercely. It had hands. They clutched me. Its skin was smooth, like my own. There it lay, pressed close up against me, solid as stone—and yet utterly invisible!

I wonder that I did not faint or go mad on the instant. Some wonderful instinct must have sustained me; for absolutely, in place of loosening my hold on the terrible Enigma, I seemed to gain an additional strength in my moment of horror, and tightened my grasp with such wonderful force that I felt the creature shivering with agony.

Just then Hammond entered my room at the head of the household. As soon as he beheld my face—which, I suppose, must have been an awful sight to look at—he hastened forward, crying, "Great Heaven, what has happened?"

"Hammond! Hammond!" I cried, "Come here. Oh, this is awful. I have been attacked in bed by something or other, which I have hold of; but I can't see it!"

Hammond, doubtless struck by the unfeigned horror expressed in my countenance, made one or two steps forward with an anxious yet puzzled expression. A very audible titter burst from the remainder of my visitors. This suppressed laughter made me furious. To laugh at a human being in my position! It was the worst species of cruelty. *Now*, I can understand why the appearance of a man struggling violently, as it would seem, with an airy nothing, calling for assistance against a vision, should have appeared ludicrous. *Then*, so great was my rage against the mocking crowd that had I the power I would have stricken them dead where they stood.

"Hammond! Hammond!" I cried again, despairingly. "For God's sake come to me. I can hold the—the thing but a short while longer. It is overpowering me. Help me! Help me!"

"Harry," whispered Hammond, approaching me, "you have been smoking too much opium."

"I swear to you, Hammond, that this is no vision," I answered, in the same low tone. "Don't you see how it shakes my whole frame with its struggles? If you don't believe me, convince yourself. Feel it—touch it."

Hammond advanced and laid his hand in the spot I indicated. A wild cry of horror burst from him. He had felt it!

In a moment he had discovered somewhere in my room a long piece of cord, and was the next instant winding it and knotting it about the body of the unseen being that I clasped in my arms.

"Harry," he said, in a hoarse, agitated voice, for though he preserved his presence of mind, he was deeply moved, "Harry, it's all safe now. You may let go, old fellow, if you're tired. The Thing can't move."

I was utterly exhausted, and I gladly loosed my hold.

Hammond stood holding the ends of the cord that bound the Invisible, twisted round his hand, while before him, self-supporting as it were, he beheld a rope laced and interlaced, and stretching tightly around a vacant space. I never saw a man look so thoroughly stricken with awe.

The confusion that ensued among the guests of the house who were witnesses of this extraordinary scene between Hammond and myself—who beheld the pantomime of binding this struggling Something—who beheld me almost sinking from physical exhaustion when my task of jailer was over—the confusion and terror that took possession of the bystanders, when they saw all this, was beyond description. The weaker ones fled from the apartment.

It was in vain that I begged of some of the men to come near and convince themselves by touch of the existence in that room of a living being which was invisible. They were incredulous, but did not dare to undeceive themselves. How could a solid, living, breathing body be invisible? they asked. My reply was this. I gave a sign to Hammond, and both of us—conquering our fearful repugnance to touch the invisible creature—lifted it from the ground, manacled as it was, and took it to

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

my bed. Its weight was about that of a boy of fourteen.

"Now, my friends," I said, as Hammond and myself held the creature suspended over the bed, "I can give you self-evident proof that here is a solid, ponderable body, which, nevertheless, you cannot see. Be good enough to watch the surface of the bed attentively."

I was astonished at my own courage in treating this strange event so calmly; but I had recovered from my first terror, and felt a sort of scientific pride in the affair, which dominated every other feeling.

The eyes of the bystanders were immediately fixed on my bed. At a given signal Hammond and I let the creature fall. There was the dull sound of a heavy body alighting on a soft mass. The timbers of the bed creaked. A deep impression marked itself distinctly on the pillow, and on the bed itself. The crowd who witnessed this gave a low cry, and rushed from the room. Hammond and I were left alone with our Mystery.

WE remained silent for some time, listening to the low irregular breathing of the creature on the bed and watching the rustle of the bed-clothes as it impotently struggled to free itself from confinement. Then Hammond spoke.

"Harry, this is awful."

"Ay, awful."

"But not unaccountable."

"Not unaccountable! What do you mean? Such a thing has never occurred since the birth of the world. I know not what to think, Hammond. God grant that I am not mad and that this is not an insane fantasy!"

"Let us reason a little, Harry. Here is a solid body which we touch but which we cannot see. The fact is so unusual that it strikes us with terror. Is there no parallel, though, for such a phenomenon? Take a piece of pure glass. It is tangible and transparent. A certain chemical coarseness is all that prevents its being so entirely transparent as to be totally invisible. It is not *theoretically impossible*, mind you, to make a glass which shall not reflect a single ray of light—a glass so pure and homogeneous in its atoms that the rays from the sun will pass through it as they do through the air, refracted but not reflected. We do not see the air, and yet we feel it."

"That's all very well, Hammond, but these are inanimate substances. Glass does not breathe, air does not breathe. This thing has a heart that palpitates—a will that moves it—lungs that play and inspire and respire."

"You forget the phenomena of which we have so often heard of late," answered the doctor gravely. "At the meetings called 'spirit circles,' invisible hands have been thrust into the hands of those persons round the table—warm, fleshly hands that seemed to pulsate with mortal life."

"What? Do you think, then, that this thing—"

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

MORNING STAR

By H. Rider Haggard

Bravely she awaited her hour of triumph—or doom. For Neter Tua, deathless daughter of the ages, had staked her throne on a soothsayer's promise of magic aid from beyond the stars against the wrath of Egypt and all its terrible gods!

Don't miss this tremendous novel of historic grandeur and delightful fantasy, by an author who has been acclaimed again and again as a master among the storytellers of all time!

Reserve your February copy now. On all newsstands December 21.

Famous 25¢
FANTASTIC
Mysteries

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"I don't know what it is," was the solemn reply; "but please the gods I will, with your assistance, thoroughly investigate it."

We watched together, smoking many pipes, all night long, by the bedside of the unearthly being that tossed and panted until it was apparently wearied out. Then we learned by the low, regular breathing that it slept.

The next morning the house was all astir. The boarders congregated on the landing outside my room, and Hammond and myself were lions. We had to answer a thousand questions as to the state of our extraordinary prisoner, for as yet not one person in the house except ourselves could be induced to set foot in the room.

The creature was awake. This was evidenced by the convulsive manner in which the bed-clothes were moved in its efforts to escape. There was something truly terrible in beholding, as it were, those second-hand indications of the terrible writhings and agonized struggles for liberty which themselves were invisible.

Hammond and myself had racked our brains during the long night to discover some means by which we might realize the shape and general appearance of the Enigma. As well as we could make out by passing our hands over the creature's form, its outlines and lineaments were human. There was a mouth; a round, smooth head without hair; a nose, which, however, was little elevated above the cheeks; and its hands and feet felt like those of a boy. At first we thought of placing the being on a smooth surface and tracing its outlines with chalk, as shoemakers trace the outline of the foot. This plan was given up as being of no value. Such an outline would give not the slightest idea of its conformation.

A happy thought struck me. We would take a cast of it in plaster-of-Paris. This would give us the solid figure, and satisfy all our wishes. But how to do it? The movements of the creature would disturb the setting of the plastic covering, and distort the mould. Another thought. Why not give it chloroform? It had respiratory organs—that was evident by its breathing. Once reduced to a state of insensibility, we could do with it what we would. Doctor X— was sent for; and after the worthy physician had recovered from the first shock of amazement, he proceeded to administer the chloroform.

In three minutes afterward we were enabled to remove the fetters from the creature's body, and a modeller was busily engaged in covering the invisible form with the moist clay. In five minutes more we had a mould, and before evening a rough facsimile of the Mystery. It was shaped like a man—distorted, uncouth, and horrible, but still a man. It was small, not over four feet and some inches in height, and its limbs revealed a muscular development that was unparalleled. Its face surpassed in hideousness anything I had ever seen. Gustave Doré, or Callot, or Tony Johannot, never conceived anything so horrible. There is a face in one of the latter's illustrations to *Un Voyage où il Vous Plaira,* which somewhat approaches the countenance of this creature, but does not equal it. It was the physiognomy of what I should fancy a ghoul might be. It looked as if it was capable of feeding on human flesh.

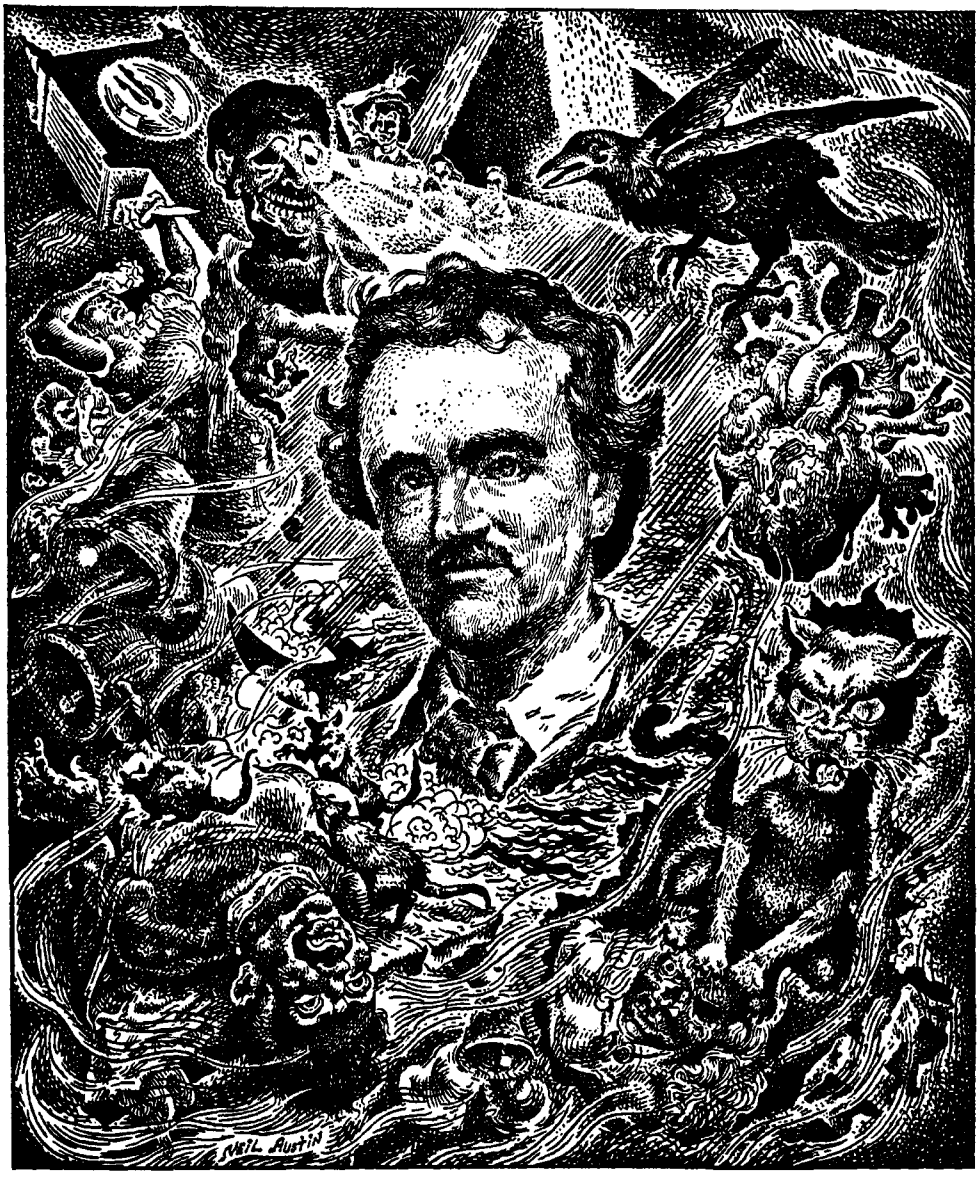
Having satisfied our curiosity, and bound every one in the house to secrecy, it became a question of what was to be done with our Enigma? It was impossible that we should keep such a horror in our house; it was equally impossible that such an awful being be let loose upon the world. I confess that I would have gladly voted for the creature's destruction. But who would shoulder the responsibility? Who would undertake the execution of this horrible semblance to a human being?

Day after day this question was deliberated gravely. The boarders all left the house. Mrs. Moffat was in despair, and threatened Hammond and myself with all sorts of legal penalties if we did not remove the Horror. Our answer was, "We will go if you like, but we decline taking this creature with us. Remove it yourself if you please. It appeared in your house. On you the responsibility rests." To this there was, of course, no answer. Mrs. Moffat could not obtain for love or money a person who would even approach the Mystery.

At last it died. Hammond and I found it cold and stiff one morning in the bed. The heart had ceased to beat, the lungs to inspire. We hastened to bury it in the garden. It was a strange funeral, the dropping of that viewless corpse into the damp hole. The cast of its form I gave to Doctor X—, who keeps it in his museum in Tenth Street.

As I am on the eve of a long journey from which I may not return, I have drawn up this narrative of an event the most singular that has ever come to my knowledge.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



MASTERS of FANTASY

Edgar Allan Poe—THE PIT AND THE PEN—His Centenary

It is 100 years ago that Poe, age 40, died. But his works still live—in reprint, radio and motion picture revival—because they were masterpieces of mystery and imagination.

He dip't his pen into night's blackest pit, and wrote with it the heart-stopping classic of "The Pit and the Pendulum", the eerie account of "The Fall of the House of Usher", the feline fear tale of "The Black Cat", the resounding lines of "The Raven" and many another powerful poem and prose piece.

His mind was a maelstrom of the macabre.

His legacy to literature, a treasury of terrifying tales of the dark recesses of the human mind—and the darker recesses of the inhuman.

This strange, doomed man. This craftsman of the curious, crazed and corrupt. This Master of Fantasy, known the wide world over: Edgar Allan Poe.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Woe be to him who spies upon the secrets of the half-world beneath our own . . . for though he may see what only few men know, so will he be punished as few men ever have been!

JAMIESON

By Margaret St. Clair

THE curse (said the man who was sitting in the armchair with the orange upholstery) which fell upon Jamieson was unjustified. As a husband he was kind, as a father, affectionate. He met his payroll promptly. Never once did he transgress the thin but definite line which separates good business dealing from skullduggery. It is true, he was not much given to piety nor efflorescent in the matter of good works—but nowadays, gentlemen, who is?

Jamieson's doom was not only unjustified, it was inappropriate. It was the sort of doom which ought to have been imposed on a poet or a reasonably romantic man of letters rather than on a prosperous roofing contractor. But when the second week in August turned intolerably hot and from day to day the heat increased until the city was a burning, echoing, emptiness, Jamieson took the resolution which led to his downfall. His wife was visiting her mother, the children were at camp. There was no reason why he should stay in town. He decided to spend a few days at the beach.

He had no reservations. Perhaps the moral of this history (the man in the orange armchair said) is always to make reservations. He tried first at the Belmont-Pierre, a de luxe hostelry surrounded by twenty-seven acres of gardens, where he and Mrs. Jamieson had always stayed before. From there, growing less choicey with every refusal, he visited eight or ten hotels, each slightly lower in the social scale than the one before. He came to rest at last in a boarding house.

Even for a boarding house, it was low. Only the hottest August in thirty-two years would have induced Jamieson to put up with it. But a wonderful cool breeze fluttered his room's dingy curtains, and he could get all his meals except breakfast at restaurants. He decided to stay.

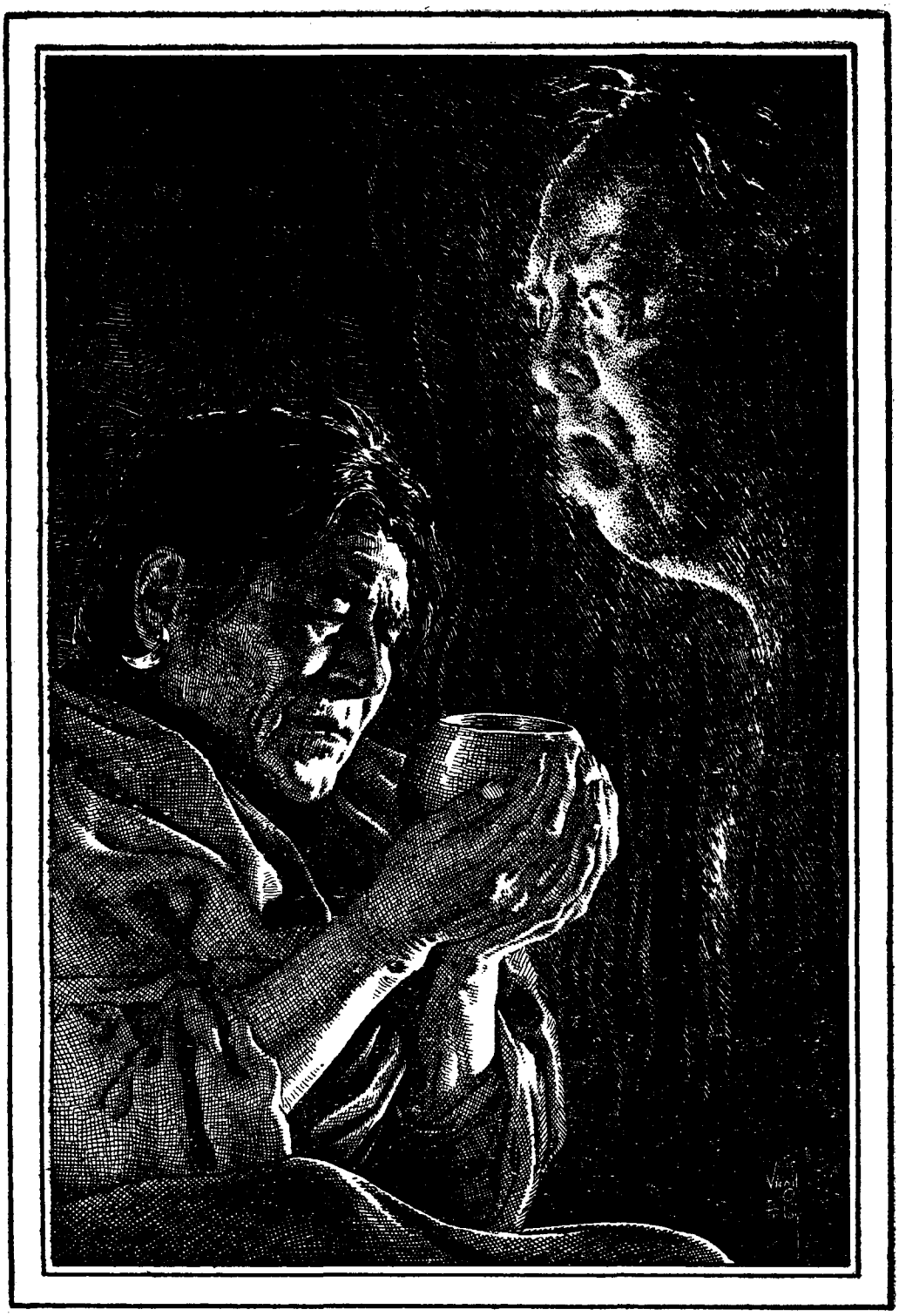
The clientèle of "Seahaven" was as dubious as the food. There was a young man who wore a bracelet on one wrist, a woman with a dry, scaly skin who slapped constantly at an imaginary fly on the bridge of her nose, and a child who brought decomposed starfish and bits of rotting seaweed into the dining room. And there was Madame Zilfa.

Jamieson noticed her particularly because she had the room next to his, and all day long people knocked at her door. She came down to breakfast the first morning of Jamieson's stay wearing an ankle-length frock of magenta-colored chiffon with sequins sewed all around the edge of the wide, wide skirt. The top part of the dress was covered by a little black plush jacket, and around her neck she wore a pallid, stringy bit of fur. Her eyes were the exact greenish yellow of a cat's.

Despite her sallow skin and dusty braids, she had a sort of haggish handsomeness. Jamieson decided that she looked like a fortuneteller at a street fair, and was pleased with the accuracy of his diagnosis when the landlady told him, with shy pride, that Madame Zilfa gave "readings" in her room.

On the second night he slept at "Seahaven" Jamieson was awakened by the thin tootling of a flute. He tried to go

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



"You have spoiled the charm for who knows how many tens of years. . . ."

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

back to sleep at first, but the noise, though slight, was persistent. Jamieson turned on the light, saw that it was nearly two o'clock, and after a moment's indecision got up and rapped sharply on the wall between his room and Madame Zilfa's.

The noise of the flute continued for a few minutes more. Then it stopped, and somebody—Madame Zilfa?—gave a low laugh.

To the sound of the flute there succeeded a soft, mouselike scurrying, a gentle patter of little sounds. Jamieson wondered vaguely as to what the noise could be, and then went back to sleep.

Jamieson should have left "Seahaven" then and there (the man in the orange armchair said). But would you, gentlemen, have found anything so alarming in the sound of a flute? I think not. Poor old Jamieson!

The next night the routine with the flute was repeated, only this time it was nearly two-thirty when Jamieson awoke. Once more he rapped on the wall, once more, after an interval, the sound of the flute ceased and Madame Zilfa laughed. Again Jamieson listened to the complex of mouse-noises and wondered what they were.

He was growing curious. This in itself would have led to nothing, nor was his purchase of a roll of peppermints during his post-prandial stroll along the beach necessarily dangerous. But the package of candy, placed insecurely on the edge of the dresser, fell off and rolled under it; Jamieson had to move the dresser out to get his candy back; and when he was picking up the dusty, hairy, filthy roll, he discovered the crack in the wall.

It was rather a wide crack, about three inches above the baseboard. Jamieson ought to have moved the dresser back against it and forgotten it. Instead, his joints creaking, he squatted down and looked through it into Mme. Zilfa's room.

THE sibyl was out at the moment, which was fortunate for Jamieson, since it deferred his doom by several hours. What he could see of her room was draped in rusty black, embroidered with the signs of the zodiac. On the table in the center of the apartment there was a crystal ball and a limp pack of playing cards; and over to the right, on top of a dresser like the one in Jamieson's own room, there was a flute, and beside it a small, square, heavy brass-bound chest. There was a padlock on the chest.

Jamieson hung a soiled shirt over the crack with a thumbtack so no ray of light would warn Mme. Zilfa when she returned. The remainder of the evening he spent in restless speculation. When it was time for bed, he took off his shoes and his coat, turned off the light, and lay down on his uneven mattress.

The first tootle of the flute awakened him. Very cautiously he groped his way across the room toward the crack. He located the pendant shirt, pulled the thumbtack out, and eased himself into a semi-recumbent position before the opening. He looked in.

Madame Zilfa was sitting cross-legged on the floor three or four feet in front of him. The brass-bound chest, the lid open and thrown back, stood at her left, and she was leaning toward it and playing the flute over it.

The soft, plaintive noise went on for a considerable length of time, while Jamieson watched and grew fidgety with expectation. At last Mme. Zilfa stopped, laid the flute aside, and got to her knees. She reached into the box and began lifting objects out of it carefully and setting them on the mat in front of her.

Jamieson had expected, I think, (said the man in the armchair upholstered in orange) serpents, as much as he had expected anything. What Madame Zilfa actually got out of the box was a number of figurines of dark brown wood, not over two inches high, and carved to represent men. They wore conical thatched straw hats, like oriental peasants, and in the hands of some of them were tiny hoes and mattocks and pruning knives. Lastly, Mme. Zilfa got from the chest what looked like a little bundle of dry twigs.

The little men began to move about on the surface of the carpet. Some of them hacked at its surface with the little mattocks and others followed behind them and planted the twigs in the furrows the mattocks users had made. As Jamieson watched, the tiniest froth of green began to appear at the top of the twigs. It expanded and grew, and Jamieson saw that the little men had planted cuttings of minute grapes. After those who had done the planting came those who pruned the vines and those who cultivated the surface of the mat with hoes.

Mme. Zilfa reached into the chest once more and brought out what seemed to be a miniature cider press. By now there were distinct touches of purple among the leaves of the vine. The workers walked up

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and down the rows, stripping off the bunches of grapes and carrying them to the press.

This all sounds very improbable, does it not? (said the narrator in the armchair.) Very improbable, and so Jamieson thought as he watched it going on. Once or twice he shut his eyes and opened them again in the hope that the action would cause the manikins to cease their agricultural operations. It had no such effect.

By now juice was beginning to drip from the tiny press. From the chest Mme. Zilfa extracted a low, shimmering, orbicular cup of pale yellow porcelain. She set it under the press, and the small gleaming purple drops trickled into it. As the cup grew full, the little workers stiffened into the immobility of wood. Madame Zilfa picked them up carefully and put them back in their box again.

The cup was full to the brim. Mme. Zilfa blew on it three times and raised it to her lips. Jamieson, in his anxiety to see everything, shifted his position. The heel of his hand came down on the thumbtack. Involuntarily he yelped. And Madame Zilfa raised her eyes and looked directly into his.

The next thing Jamieson knew, he was standing in front of the sorceress, having left his room behind him in a rush. He rather thought he had left his body, too, for though it was a warm evening he was feeling most distressfully cold. For a space Madame Zilfa looked at him and meditated, smiling unpleasantly, while Jamieson wriggled around on her gaze like a caterpillar on a pin.

"Now, by Isis and Osiris and Anubis, the conductor of the dead!" the sorceress said. "By Set the ill-minded and hawk-headed Horus! By the Weigher of Hearts and the Guardian of the Gates!" And she went on for quite a time invoking various heathen deities whom poor old Jamieson had never heard of before. "So you, you little squirt with the potbelly, you were watching me the whole time I performed the lunar oblation, were you? Fah! I like your nerve!" And having apparently arrived at the end of her invective, she tapped her teeth and looked at him.

Jamieson painfully felt his disembodied condition. Even if he had been able to think of anything to say in his defense, he lacked a throat to say it with. But even in this dreadful moment he could not help observing that Madame Zilfa's neck was dirty and that her lipstick had been patchily applied.

"For your curiosity alone you deserve to be punished," the enchantress said. "But when I think that you have spoiled the charm for who knows how many tens of years, when I consider that your profane gaze has sucked the virtue from my puppets of basuto wood, and rendered the juice of my moon grapes no more potent as an elixir than so much wine vinegar, then—"

And Mme. Zilfa gnashed her teeth at him.

"We must try to suit the punishment to the crime," she said at last. "Do you, then, hunt basuto wood and moon grape cuttings for me. I anticipate it will take you quite a time, but do not let that worry you. You have all eternity before you. On your way, then, on your way!" And with a rush and a thump, Jamieson was back inside his body again.

Since then, gentlemen, (the man in the armchair stretched out his legs and sighed) poor old Jamieson has been pretty much on the go. He's been twice to Africa, hunting basuto wood, and once to the Mountains of the Moon, after the moon grapes. The second time in Africa he had filarial fever and thought he was going to die, but he didn't.

That's the funny thing about Jamieson —there's always money in his pockets, and he can't seem to die. When he was in South America a bushmaster stung him and his hand rotted and then his whole side. It hurt so much he asked the people with him to kill him, but they were frightened and ran away, and after a while he got over it.

He always gets over it.

Once he was down in a submarine, hunting the moon grapes, and something went wrong with the pumps. Everyone else drowned, but poor old Jamieson went floating up to the top and stayed there for days. His tongue swelled up with thirst, and he wanted to die that time too, but he couldn't, and after a while a ship picked him up.

His only chance, he thinks, is that some time they'll develop a rocket ship that will go to the moon. If there are moon grapes anywhere, they'll be on the moon, don't you think so, gentlemen? Of course that would leave him still hunting the basuto wood.

By the way, none of you know anything about basuto wood, do you? Or moon grapes? I thought not.

You don't know how tired I get of hunting them.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

(Continued from page 8)

"The Masters of Fantasy" was good, too. The poem "The Three" was a masterpiece. But I sure wish that you'd back such pieces of greatness like "The Three" with the ads which don't matter to most of us. Then we could cut out and frame such works without losing any part of a story or any other important wordage.

And now I'd like to ask a favor. Puhleez! Who's got a copy of F.N. or F.F.M. which has A. Merritt's "Ship of Ishtar" in it? And also where can I get a copy of the magazine or magazines which include Richard S. Shaver's "I Remember Lemuria"? (In '44 or '45 *Amazing*, I think?) And I'd like to get hold of any and all of R. S. Shaver's works, especially in magazine form, up to and including 1947.

The Readers' Viewpoint is up to par as per usual—and the cover and inside illos are tops! Keep up the very fine work. As long as F.N. and F.F.M. are on the stands I'll buy 'em.

Oh, yes, as an afterthought, I'm an ex-seaman and would like to hear from some other ex-seamen science fiction fans. I'll answer each and every letter I get.

Sciencefictionally yours,

FRED WRIGHT.

Ft. Hill,
R.F.D. #2,
LeRoy, N. Y.

A Reader's Choice

Since F.F.M. is in its second decade now I thought I would list what I considered to be the best twenty stories it has published in its first decade. The first ten stories are from the first 26 issues published by the Munsey Co. 1939-42. The second ten are from the 33 issues of Popular Publications 1943-49. Lots of fine stories are omitted but this is a fault common to all such selections.

The Conquest of the Moon Pool, The Spot of Life, Darkness and Dawn (trilogy), The Radio Man (series), The Rebel Soul (also its sequel), The Metal Monster, Wild Wullie, the Waster, The Colour Out of Space, The Girl in the Golden Atom, Three Lines of Old French.

The Purple Sapphire, The Lost Continent, The Star Rover, The Ancient Allan, The Iron Star, The Willows, The Ghost Pirates, The Wendigo, The Highwayman, The Purple Cloud.

It is to be seen if F.F.M. con continue to give us stories of equal or better (impossible!) quality in the years to come. Some of the greatest classics of science fiction and other branches of fantasy have seen print in the pages of F.F.M. and therefore the search for stories of high caliber must of necessity become more difficult. Some of the readers want stories which are very good yet the copyrights cannot be obtained. More people should realize this simple though unpleasant fact and perhaps they would appreciate what a good job you have done in giving us stories that are truly "gems".

Before people start to think I believe "the editor can do no wrong", I wish to protest against the repeated reprinting of A. Merritt's stories in F.N. Certainly they can stand reprinting time after time but to fans that have his works from earlier issues of F.F.M. and F.N. this singular emphasis on one author prevents the reprinting of stories that need to be read by the present generation of fantasy fans. Need I only mention the names of Flint, Smith, Kline, etc.? One of the Merritt stories every ten issues is not too bad and I do like to see the new illustrations.

Please give us a regular editor's page like in the old F.F.M. Your present letters in the Readers' Viewpoint seem to be a step in the right direction. The readers seem to want it.

ED WOOD.

31 N. Aberdeen St.,
Chicago 7, Ill.

Likes "Lost Race" Yarns

I didn't plan to write you a letter this month but, after glancing at pages 111, 116 and 117 of your August F.F.M., I just couldn't remain silent. Bless you, you've got Bok!! Oh, happy day! They were darned good Boks, too.

I have no complaints about your choice of story material. As usual your magazine's fictional content was very good indeed.

"The Valley of Silent Men" wasn't the best yarn you have printed but it wasn't the worst, either. It was interesting enough to hold my interest to the end and that's all I ask of any yarn. What's all the noise in TRV against "lost race" yarns about? Personally, I haven't read any in your mag that I didn't like and I've read 'em all for a bit more than a year.

Margaret St. Clair's yarn was swell! More like this!

The poem was good, too. As long as you are going in for poetry, how about some Lovecraft and Smith?

I'd like to ask if any Connecticut fan would be interested in forming some sort of fan club. As far as I know, this state is sadly in need of one. If any of you Connfen would care to have a try at it, write me.

Yours for lost races and bigger and better Boks—

BILL CALABRESE—
(He of the green face)

52 Pacific St.,
Stamford, Conn.
P.S. We want Lovecraft!!

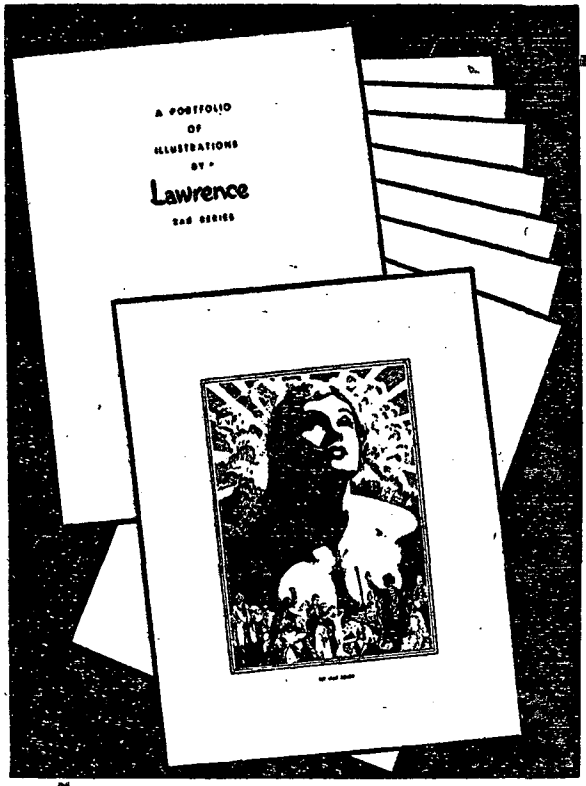
Liked "The Three"

I have just finished the August issue of F.F.M. While it did not hit the spot as unerringly as some previous issues, it will nevertheless go into my file for special binding. I make these covers myself, from suede and unusual materials, and since I am not hard on magazines and books they look pretty nice. The picture cover of course (being an intrinsic part of the magazine) will be protected with cellophane. Please understand I do not treat all fantasy and stf. mags this way—only the ones I want to keep for "mine very own," fer ever and everrrrrr.

Vivian's "The Valley of Silent Men" has spellbinding effects in certain portions, but

(Continued on page 120)

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



A NEW LAWRENCE PORTFOLIO!

(Series Two)

Eight Beautiful Reproductions of Illustrations By the Well Known Artist

Lawrence

Each drawing is reproduced on fine glossy paper, size 9 x 12, ready for framing.

A set of these beautiful "Lawrences", enclosed in a special portfolio, may be obtained for only 25¢ if you subscribe to FAMOUS FANTASTIC MYSTERIES magazine for a full year. Complete sets of pictures alone may be had at 75c per set. Fill out the offer you prefer.

Note—the supply of this new portfolio is extremely limited. Place your order now to insure receiving this wonderful set.

FAMOUS FANTASTIC MYSTERIES and the Lawrence Portfolio, combined.

Sub. Dept. 10, All-Fiction Field, Inc.
205 East 42nd St., N. Y. C. 17.

Here is my $1.75. Please send a year's subscription and a set of "Lawrences" to

Name.....

Address.....

This offer is good only in U.S.A.
F. F. M. December

LAWRENCE PORTFOLIO, only.

All-Fiction Field, Inc.
205 East 42nd St., N. Y. C. 17.

Here is my 75¢. Please send one Lawrence Portfolio of eight illustrations to

Name.....

Address.....

This offer is good only in U.S.A.
F. F. M. December

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

(Continued from page 118)

other portions have a decidedly letting-down effect (on me at least.) I did not like the ending—but then, who would be completely satisfied with "reality" after a dream of beauty? The ending, however, does leave one with the feeling that somehow and sometime the ultimate beauty and wisdom will be found, even though one does have to make concessions to the present urge for expansion and activity.

"The Counter Charm," by Margaret St. Clair, was not much to my liking, either—but her idea is sufficiently novel and horrible to leave an unforgettable impression.

Where is Finlay, our Bubble-Boy? Gotta have him, gotta have him. Bok is splendid, suave, sophisticated; Lawrence, strong, dignified, unsurpassed on cover work—but we gotta have Finlay.

Let me congratulate you heartily for the inclusion and excellent printing and art-job on Burnham's poem, "The Three." Burnham Eaton has achieved a poem which ranks among the best of classic fantasy poems. It has a haunting and ravishing rhythm or lilt which few poets outside of Poe have ever matched. Its understatement is striking to the nth degree, and again let me congratulate you! Let's have more poems if they approach the quality of this one.

DWIGHT AUGUSTINE.

PO Box 545,
Lima, Ohio.

Praising Leydenfrost

Have just received my subscription copy of the June issue. I was pleased to find "The Purple Cloud" in it, but the illustrations were a disappointment to me. The artist who illustrated the short story seems to have more technical skill. This is the same artist, judging from the signature, whose paintings of aircraft have appeared in *Esquire*.

Can anyone supply the issues of *Fantastic Novels* containing "The Moon Pool," "The Conquest of the Moon Pool," and "Seven Footprints to Satan," and the issue of F.F.M. containing "The Purple Sapphire"? I can offer stamps in exchange.

THOMAS G. L. COCKCROFT.

111 Owen St.,
Wellington, S1,
New Zealand.

Bok Enthusiast

The Bok illustration for "The Counter Charm" in the August F.F.M. is the best pic I've seen in any fantasy magazine for many a moon. It is really a work of art. I'm sure that the pic will be the cause of your receiving many demands from readers for a Bok portfolio. At least, I hope you will offer reproductions of the illustration on a good grade of paper. I'd like very much to have a copy of it suitable for framing.

By all means, give us more Bok . . . and I'd like to see some Bok covers on both F.F.M. and F.N.

Why not some of Merritt's poems, illustrated by Bok?

How about Kline, Ray Cummings, Zagat's "Drink We Deep" and some of Theodore Roscoe's work in F.N.? And for F.F.M.:—Hodgson, Taine, Haggard, and any other fantasy that Marshall may have written.

VERNELL CORIELL.

1100 Western Ave.,
Peoria, Ill.

Fair Warning!

Once more it is time to compose a masterful missive to that aristocrat among fantasy magazines, F.F.M. So taking my typer in hand . . . ungh! . . . too heavy. So then, using the thing in conventional manner, I am pleased to report that you have gladdened the hearts of thousands of fen all over the country by using Bok! His style is perfect for that type of short story, and he is more than passing on any kind of work.

Please keep him. Let's have him in at least four issues per year, huh?

Now that the initial rave is finished, I'll go back to the front and work through the mag, tearing and ripping and . . . uh, I mean, applauding and praising.

First, the cover is a good symbolic Lawrence. And that flower. . . .

Novel: Like his first F.F.M. novel, this, too, is a lost-land yarn, but by far better and very much more readable than the other. My misgivings were for naught, thank goodness! Of course, the prime plot thread in this story was the love life of Marshall with the conflicting radically different love of Stephanie (reluctantly growing) and the strange love of Aia.

The lost valley was almost incidental. Instrumental in showing the great contrast between the two women, one of which Marshall (disappointed and disillusioned by a unfortunate first love) must inevitably fall for. Well, what I'm trying to get at is this. This novel is not the kind I want to find when I pick up F.F.M. While readable and worth the time spent reading it (whereas with some of F.F.M.'s offerings I've been darned glad to see the number of pages-to-be-read dwindle and dwindle instead of vice versa), it does not enthrall me as would a novel like "The Greatest Adventure," "The Boats of the Glen Carrig" and similar stories. This one had an almost casualness to it. No pulse of action (not that I wish to be given gory, rip-roaring adventure, mind you!) in it nor any suspense and unknown dangers of an alien fantastic land or world.

This story, unlike a lot of lost-land stories, did have the gimmick, in this case the flowers, which did make it more fantastic, whereas a lot of them have merely been isolated fragments of old civilizations which struggled onward in their existence. Most notable exception recently was "Dian of the Lost Land." There you have my opinion on the idea. Whether any or many have similar thoughts may come out in the wash.

The short story was reminiscent of stories by

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Kornbluth (under his pen-names) and several other authors in some of the short-lived s-f magazines of the 1939-41 period. I wish there were more of them. And, as I mentioned, the Bok was fitted wonderfully. I beg of you, please keep Bok producing, huh? His work in S.S.S. is good and very welcome, but this work is his Super Grade-A fantastic grotesquerie!

The poem, while not too weird, horrific, terror-ridden or fantastic, was a suitable vehicle for the two-page Bok spread. And that is why I'm glad the poem was there! That Bok . . . ah!

By this time, I assume you are getting the idea that I *sorta like* Bok's work.

MoF was, as always, a fitting feature.

In the future . . . as almost always, the next offering is almost totally unknown to all but the collectors and connoisseurs of fantasy. It can turn out good or badly; it has the same old misfitting blurb; but at least it is in the "Checklist"!

I'm giving you fair warning here and now. One of these days you will be startled out of your wits to see a glaring-eyed, frothing-at-the-mouth being come barging into your office despite outer-fringe delaying elements, and confront you face to face over a matter of great importance. That will be me, and the matter will be why you haven't even given at least the teeniest hint about what you are going to do about Chambers' "Slayer of Souls." And another thing. It is far past time to give us more W. H. Hodgson. If not a long novel like the unforgettable "Boats," how about a novelette or short? "The Ghost Pirates" and "The Derelict" were both of the highest caliber.

Well, I'll go now, peaceably, too, but I'll be back, for it is inevitable. Yeh, that Maine-iac . . . he'll be back.

Exasperatedly,

ED COX.

4 Spring St.,
Lubec, Maine.

Pleased to See Bok Pics

One of the main reasons I'm writing is the little note to the readers at the beginning of the Aug. Readers' Viewpoint. I know that I and many of my friends were pleased to have a personal note from you. You were usually so stand-offish in the magazine. We didn't think you were very friendly. So it is nice to have that note on the next issue and your thoughtfulness in procuring that interesting letter on Shiel. Thank you so much.

Another reason in writing was to express my extreme pleasure in seeing Bok back in *fantasy* illustrating, and especially in your magazine. Both of his illustrations went very well in mood with what they illustrated. Bok is so extremely versatile. I don't think he could ever illustrate a story in the wrong way.

Paul Anderson's letter in the Readers' Viewpoint interested me. All those foreign novels he mentioned sound fascinating. The only one I am familiar with is "The Wonderful Adventures of Nils". I, too, would like to see it in F.F.M., Poul, but I doubt if it would be appreciated by many other people.

Here I've said much about the letter section of the August issue and nothing about the rest, except Bok. Finlay was missed, but Bok made up for him in full. The cover was the most beautiful one since "The Scarlet Plague", but not by much. The novel wasn't spectacular, but it was interesting and enjoyable reading. The climax was—I won't say ironic, it was more than that. The drowning of the valley was majestic and sad. The ending was vague in my mind, though. The short was good, but F.F.M. short stories, to me, should always be of the quality and type of "Daemon". It's nice to have poetry in F.F.M., 'specially Bok-illustrated poetry.

After looking at the many long lists of books that readers want you to print, I did some really serious thinking, and after quite a while, I came up with two books that, in my opinion, are quite the best things you could print. The two are quite different, but both are the type that would appeal to the casual reader, and would infinitely please the regular fan. They are—De Camp and Pratt's "The Incomplete Enchanter" and Merritt-Bok's "The Black Wheel". If you readers approve of the choice, how about writing the editor and telling her? I think we all would be very pleased to see them published in the next year.

BILL SEARLES.

827 Nathan Hale Road,
West Palm Beach, Fla.

About the Nan Matal

If anyone's interested in photos of the Nan Matal ruins described in the two "Moon Pool" yarns, consult "The Fortunate Islands" by Comdr. Walter Karig. He has a fair spread on it. The Nan Matal islands are built up of basalt columns, the odd six-sided stones such as are found in the Palisades and the Giant's Causeway. There's enough of it shown to give you a good idea of the place. Incidentally, the fear the natives have of the place is not fiction. Karig says that 98.7% of the Ponapeans won't come near the others are scared stiff.

There are very few legends of these rocks, as the misisonaries all talked the natives out of their old ideas, legends and all.

Karig notes particularly that the ruins are not the work of the ancestors of Ponape's present natives. They are religious stuff in contrast to the useful stonework done on Yap, where the natives use and keep up a lot of stone construction. He is as puzzled as anyone else about it. In various trips he has seen most of the world's great ruins, but for awe-inspiring sights he backs the Nan Matal against all of 'em. Apparently the place is another ancient puzzle to rank with Tiahuanaco and the stone forts of the Aran Islands.

JOHN P. CONLON.

52 Columbia St.,
Newark, Ohio.

Wants Books and Mags

I would like to purchase the following books by Edgar Rice Burroughs: Tanar of Pellucidar,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Land of Terror, Back to the Stone Ages, Jungle Girl, The Lad and The Lion, The Oakdale Affair and The Rider.

Also, I would like any magazines that have stories by Burroughs and Otis Adelbert Kline.

Much success in your magazines.

ELLIOT FRANKLIN.

318 Beverly Road,
Brooklyn 18, New York.

Some Help Needed

I am contemplating a scholarly, critical study of these six science-fiction writers: Ray Bradbury, Robert A. Heinlein, Henry Kuttner, Clark Ashton Smith, Theodore Sturgeon, and A. E. van Vogt.

Perhaps some of your readers have knowledge of some biographical details or anecdotes concerning these men; or perhaps they have letters from them offering some clue as to why they write what they write. If so, I should greatly appreciate hearing from them; and if my study eventuates in a book they may be sure that I shall properly credit my sources.

SAM SACKETT.

Route 2, Box 24,
Redlands, Calif.

Likes Our Cover Girls

It has been some time since I have commented on the best fantasy mag on the stands today. You are now, as in the past, doing a fine job of selecting the lead novels for the Novels part of the duo, but some of the later pieces for F.F.M. have not suited my fancy.

Finlay is, as ever, still tops, although I would be pleased to see Bok do some of the interior illustrations. Oh, for a cover by Bok!! Am I ostracised for this suggestion?

I am in the market for some old issues of mags. containing stories by E. R. Burroughs. Some of the later ones are here listed: *Fantastic Adventures,* March, July, Nov. 1941. March 1942. *Amazings* for 1942 and 1941. I would like to get hold of some old *Argosy* issues dating back to 1921. Anyone finding these on their respective shelves would benefit by sending me a list. I also need about 20 issues of *Blue Book.* A list of any of this mag would also be appreciated. Any old *All Stories* containing Burroughs or *A. S. Cavalier* for May 16, 1914. Also *Thrilling Adventure* for March and May 1940.

I also need quite a few of the cloth bound books by Burroughs as well as most anything by Kline.

In exchange for the above mentioned items I have for trade numerous mags dating back to 1946 including Amazing, *Fantastic Adventures, Weird, Planet,* F.F.M., F.N. and loads of pocket books by Merritt, C. S. Lewis, Thorne Smith, Lovecraft and assorted volumes of collected shorts. Also a cloth bound book or two along the fantasy line, the titles of which at the time escape my memory. A complete list will be sent to all who inquire.

May I say, that in my estimation, a lovely girl on the cover is not in the least objectionable. Any one whose being contains the least bit of the artistic sense in the broad-minded manner will, I am certain, agree with me on this comment.

Both of the magazines are swell.

V. R. HEINER.

346 Third St.,
California, Pa.

Likes Prehistoric Novels

Have been reading F.F.M. for approximately eight years, now, and of course make a point of buying its companion magazine, F.N., also, since you have been goon enough to resume its publication.

Of all the stories you have printed, John Taine's stand out most vividly in my mind, particularly his "Before the Dawn" and "Greatest Adventure". I have always been addicted to prehistoric novels, so was also greatly pleased with Tooker's "Day of the Brown Horde" and also with Mitchell's "Three Go Back."

I have many back copies of F.F.M. I would be willing to part with. Also other miscellaneous S. F. and F. magazines and books including Merritt's "Black Wheel", Shiel's "Purple Cloud", Williamson's "Legion of Space", Sharpe's "Warrior of the Dawn', Sloan's "To Walk the Night", "Best Supernatural Stories of H. P. Lovecraft", and others all in mint condition and with dust wrappers.

Sincerely,

DALE RIDGEWAY.

465 Lily St.
Mansfield, Ohio.

Reader Needs Help

In the past year, thanks to a friend of mine, I was introduced to an American magazine *(Famous Fantastic Mysteries.)* The stories contained were "The Scarlet Plague" by Jack London, and "Nordenholt's Million" by J. J. Connington. I enjoyed both of them immensely.

• I am now just about stumped. There don't seem to be any F.F.M. mags about. My friend has gone away and I just don't know how I can obtain such brilliant literature in any other form.

Possibly there are fans in America who would be kind enough to send a copy occasionally.

I am also anxious to obtain American records. I shall be pleased to send British S.F. books in exchange for either F.F.M. mags or recordings I may require—or maybe some American fans would like some of our British recordings.

Please keep up your fine standard of publication.

C. R. CLARKE.

8 Derby Rd.,
North End,
Portsmouth, England.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE READERS' VIEWPOINT

Never A Bad Yarn!

Before making any comments or suggestions, let me state I have in my possession every F.F.M. and F.N. and *Super-Science* magazine since they were first issued years ago, so I guess I am qualified to write to you.

I have no complaints. I find every story good in its own particular way, and so thoroughly enjoy each magazine. However, I do have my favorites. Since I am only 30 years old, I have never read or even heard of most of the stories written from 1912 to 1927. I have read all of those old tales you reprinted in F.F.M. and F.N. and I have yet to find a bad one among them. These stories while very old, are all new to me, and I sincerely hope you keep reprinting them. Such tales as Farley's "The Radio Man" and England's "Darkness and Dawn" trilogy, "The Polaris" tales, and any and all works of A. Merritt are beyond description and rank highly above the present day works of the same nature.

Please give us each magazine as a monthly.

HARRY J. MARSHALL.

51-42 30th Ave.,
Woodside, L. I., N. Y.

Vivian's Story Enjoyable

I have just finished reading E. Charles Vivian's "Valley of Silent Men" and can truthfully say it is the best since "The Scarlet Plague" by Jack London in the February issue.

A very enjoyable story and a return to some of the old type of stories associated with the early classics.

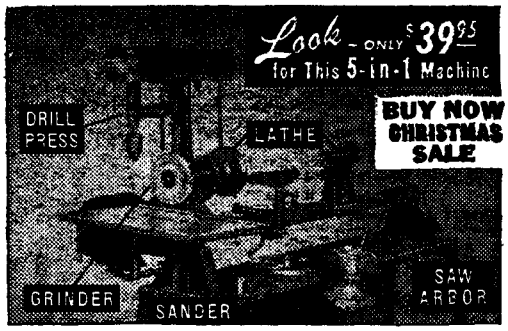
I'm still breathlessly waiting for a Cro-Magnon-Neaderthal story which will be entirely different from the conventional fiction picture of extreme contrast and violent war of the atomic age.

"Dian of the Lost Land" in your past issue just didn't come up to expectations in my estimation. After reading the story, one conclusion is unavoidable, the story as such was "lousy." Corny but up to the point.

Speaking of F.F.M. since its conception in "39" and up to the present issue, by and large it has tried to give the best in fantasy and science fiction. I believe you are doing a good job in upholding the original aims of bringing hard to get stories within the reach of the average reader or fan. You also show a marked tendency to print what the majority asks for, within the tolerance of your editorial limits.

The only disagreeable note outside of not being a monthly publication is that when you embark on a type of story you keep on the same subject until it appears that the supply is inexhaustible. A little more variety would be much more pleasant.

It seems to be fashionable when writing a letter to recommend a long list of stories for publication. First, I'd like to go negative and vote against Lovecraft and H. G. Wells, and I might add Burroughs. As all of these have been fairly extensively published elsewhere. I would much rather see something by Howard



Have fun. Save money on home repairs. Operate profitable part-time business. Get heavy-duty Emrick Lathe, Drill Press, Saw Arbor, Grinder, Sander—all in ONE machine, using ONE motor. Only $39.95 cash, or on Easy Payments. 10-Day FREE Trial. MONEY-BACK GUARANTEE. Our 51st year building quality tools. Write for FREE Catalog, describing our Big 10-Day Pre-Christmas Sale. EMRICK INC., 1694 Clinton, Kalamazoo, Mich.

SALESMAN! MAKE OVER $30.00 A DAY!

Sell nationally advertised Adding Machine for only $12.95 complete. A desk model portable, precision built, fully guaranteed, every inch a business machine. Easy to operate, easy to sell, easy for you to make big money at 49% profit! For life-size color photo and full details, write today to:

LIGHTNING ADDING MACHINE CO., Inc.
Dept. F-1, 543 So. Spring St., Los Angeles 13, Calif.

Watch Repairing Pays Big Money Learn at Home

Free Literature Tells How

Watchmakers in big demand. You train step-by-step under experts. You learn to take a watch apart—repair and put in perfect working order. 10 easy lessons. We furnish all tools, and a 15 jeweled watch. Practice movement with first lesson.

Turn spare time into cash—perhaps a business of your own. A licensed school. Students 18 to 65 have profited by our training. Low cost.

Write Today for All the Facts—No Obligation

WATCH REPAIRING Dept. PF12 2870 Elston Ave. Chicago 18, Ill.

SORE MUSCLES?

BODY ACHES?

When muscles are stiff and sore from unusual exercise or strain, use HEET®, the liniment that's *strong* yet does not burn the skin. Wonderful relief from muscular soreness comes as comforting HEET quickly starts to *penetrate*. Just brush it on with the applicator. HEET starts at once to ease muscular pain and *keeps on* working for hours, warms and soothes the painful area.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

MAKE MORE MONEY
Taking Orders For The NIMROD Line

Earn more money every day in the year representing old established firm with a complete line of fast selling necessities: Shirts of all kinds, Ties, Underwear, Hosiery, Raincoats, Sweaters, Pants, Shoes, Uniforms, etc. Every item guaranteed. Experience unnecessary.
Write Quick for FREE SALES EQUIPMENT
NIMROD COMPANY
4922-BM Lincoln Ave. Chicago, Ill.

SEND FOR THIS FREE!
Make money. Know how to break and train horses. *Write today for this book FREE*, together with special offer of a course in Animal Breeding. If you are interested in Gaiting and Riding the saddle horse, check here ( ) *Do it today—now.*
BEERY SCHOOL OF HORSEMANSHIP
Dept. 8412 Pleasant Hill, Ohio

INVENTORS
Learn how to protect your invention. Specially prepared "Patent Guide" containing detailed information concerning patent protection and procedure with "Record of Invention" form will be forwarded to you upon request—without obligation.
CLARENCE A. O'BRIEN & HARVEY JACOBSON
Registered Patent Attorneys
926-K District National Bldg. Washington 5, D. C.

Originally $29.95 CHRONOGRAPH
Sensational genuine STOP WATCH value with 2 button stop and start for accurately timing races, moving objects, etc. Also measures speed and distance. Metal stretch band. Radium dial. Sweep second hand. Written Guarantee Bond. FREE handsome plastic gift box given. Send only $9.95 (Federal Tax included) C.O.D. Satisfaction guaranteed.
only $9.95 *inc. tax*
or order
MARVEL JEWELRY CO. Dept. C-26
501 Pine Street St. Louis 2, Mo.

LAW...
STUDY AT HOME Legally trained men win higher positions and bigger success in business and public life. Greater opportunities now than ever before.
More Ability: More Prestige: More Money We guide you step by step. You can train at home during spare time. Degree of LL.B. We furnish all text material, including 14-volume Law Library. Low cost, easy terms. Get our valuable 48-page "Law Training for Leadership" and "Evidence" books FREE. Send NOW.
LASALLE EXTENSION UNIVERSITY, 417 South Dearborn Street
A Correspondence Institution, Dept. 12334-L, Chicago 5, Ill.

Your Assurance Of
TOPS IN READING ENTERTAINMENT
Whatever your preference in fiction—Western, Detective, Sports, Western Romance, Science Fiction, Fantasy, Adventure, Love Stories—You'll find a Popular Publication Magazine to suit your taste.
WATCH FOR THE SEAL—
THE HALL MARK OF FICTION QUALITY

FAMOUS FANTASTIC MYSTERIES

Brown, C. L. Moor, John Taine, or Otis A. Kline.

I have on hand for whoever is interested some books and these magazines. F.F.M. 1946 March; 1947 October; *Astounding Science Fiction*, 1945, 1946, 1947, 1948.

JACK SCHWAB.
523 N. Armstrong St.
Portsmouth; Va.

"The Counter Charm" Scores

Every so often, with a rather grim certainty, we faithful followers of F.F.M. find ourselves confronted with a lost-race story. We sit and contemplate each other in mutual annoyance for a while, then dig in and hope for the best. "The Valley of Silent Men." by E. Charles Vivian, in the August issue, is a case in point. I should hazard a guess that newer readers will find much to admire in it. On the other hand, we ancients who have read the same story several thousand times may be expected to be less overwhelmed by the mind-shattering concepts embodied in the yarn.

There is a certain charm, though, in reading a familiar story like Vivian's novel. You can sit back and predict both plot and incidentals with pleasing accuracy. You can generally count on the jungle trek, the legendary lost-race, assorted natural wonders, a native heroine who is beauty personified, the wise old native, and a certain amount of rhetoric devoted to philosophy, the elder gods, and Unspoiled Children of Nature. On these counts, Author Vivian emerges with a perfect score.

Some writers, notably Merritt and, to a lesser degree, Haggard, managed to lift The Story up to a high plane indeed. Vivian, both here and in "The City of Wonder" some time back, wallows around in mediocrity—not bad, not good. He is readable, however, and that is something.

I think I would have enjoyed his novel more had it not been for Victor Marshall, who is about as exasperating a gent as I have run across in many a moon. "Six feet of the best of English manhood, lean, broad-shouldered, clean-eyed, shaven and groomed as a man should be."

St. Clair's "The Counter Charm" makes for a lovely idea and a pretty fair story; I enjoyed it. Eaton's poem is quite poignant, and Bok's decoration a honey. Hang onto Bok.

Lawrence's cover is good—one of the best you have had since Popular took over, in fact. The girl is really beautiful for a pleasant change, and the painting is artistic in a satisfying sort of a way. I guess the girl is Aia, eh? Hmmm. Mah-Eng ought to be readily accessible by plane. . . .

"Masters of Fantasy" continues to be an interesting feature, and the letters even more so. Suggestions? Well, why not try Bok on the cover some time? How about an Algernon Blackwood novel, one of the rarer ones? Arthur Machen's "The Hill of Dreams"? You could do a lot worse than to look into Poul Anderson's interesting suggestions. The next time we have to have a lost race epic, let Haggard handle it. By the way, I hope I don't

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sound overly caustic—F.F.M.'s a fine magazine. It could be better, of course, but couldn't we all? Your batting average is high enough to keep things interesting, for which thank you and the best of luck.

CHAD OLIVER.

Harper Star Route,
Kerrville, Texas.

Completely Absorbing

For the very first time in lo, these many years of reading my favorite science fiction magazines, you have the questionable honor of receiving this bit of correspondence from me.

I differ in one respect from most of your readers, in not speaking of how bad or good your stories are. My evaluation is based on whether I like or dislike what I read, for, although I dare say I have been reading magazines such as F.F.M. for more than 24 years, I still feel I have no right to say they are good and bad or indifferent.

The purpose of this letter is to inquire of a name I have read many times in many different magazines—Charles Hart. Are there any outstanding books about him I should read? Can anyone tell me?

I have no fault to find with any of your stories. I love them all, and especially in this last issue, "The Valley of Silent Men". It was completely absorbing to me. Fine works like these are always a pleasure to come across.

E. M. WENTZEL.

2830 E. 13th St.,
Wichita 6, Kansas.

Keep Up the Poetry

As long as you give us such stories as "The Valley of Silent Men" you will get my two bits every issue, but, dear editor, *please* no more like "Counter Charm". It was exactly like the monsters, lousy. Hope you keep up the poems.

And now to those readers who would like some back issues and other fantasy mags. I have been collecting for quite a while and have over 60 mags I will sell. A stamped, self-addresed envelope will bring you the list.

JAMES MOORE.

Morganton, N. C.
Rt. 2, Box 110.

"Dian" Wonderful

This letter is written mainly to announce that if anyone wants any back issues of magazines in '47 and'48, I will send them for 40c apiece.

This goes for love, detective, and Western stories, too.

Also a few *Air Aces*, etc., scattered. If I haven't got the ones you want on hand, I will refund the money.

Please make alternate choices.

Sorry, no C.O.D.'s.

I wish to thank you, Mr. Edison Marshall,

See Lionel trains at your favorite store.

for my Son

LIONEL TRAINS

They're so REAL! They last a lifetime with reasonable care. They're fun and excitement for Father and Son. They puff real smoke and whistle like real trains. See them at your local store. Lionel Train sets priced as low as $15.95.

Send for 40-page full color catalog

LIONEL TRAINS, P.O. Box 253
Madison Square Station, New York 10, New York

I enclose 10c. Please send me the new 40-page, full-color Lionel Train Catalog for 1949.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Zone _____ State _____

AUTO BOOKS ON APPROVAL

SEND NO MONEY. Just mail the coupon for a complete set of 4 Big, Thick Auto Books, 20th Edition. Over 2700 Pages! Whether you are a mechanic or helper, expert or apprentice, auto owner or driver, take immediate advantage of this FREE EXAMINATION OFFER.

MAKE GOOD MONEY NOW
HOLD A PERMANENT JOB

America wants its automobiles kept in good repair. Men with "know how" are in demand, at big pay. These books will help you get and hold an important job, or give you a chance to go into business for yourself now or later. Any man who half tries to improve himself can learn auto servicing and repairing by this quick reference method. Use the JIFFY INDEX to find easily understood answer to any auto problem. These wonder books prepared by eleven of America's great automobile engineers. Many hundreds of valuable illustrations. Send the coupon TODAY.

CAN YOU FIX IT?
These wonder books tell step by step HOW to make difficult repairs and adjustments, how to keep a car at maximum efficiency, including latest improvements in car design and operation. Engine troubles and how to correct them well covered.

4 BIG, THICK VOLUMES
Over 2700 pages, 2000 illustrations, wiring diagrams, etc. Beautiful modernistic, washable cloth binding.

[A year's consulting privileges with our engineers now given with these books without extra charge.]

Publishers Since 1898

AMERICAN TECHNICAL SOCIETY, Dept. A931
Drexel Ave. at 58th St., Chicago 37, Ill.
I would like to examine your 4-Volume Set of Auto Books. I will pay the delivery charges only, but if I choose I may return them express collect. If after 10 days' use I prefer to keep them, I will send you $2 and pay the balance at the rate of only $3 a month until $24.80 has been paid. Please include consulting service as offered above.
Name .....
Address .....
City ..... State .....
Please attach letter stating age, occupation, employer's name and address, and name and address of at least one business man as reference. Men in service, also please give home address.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Imported Swiss Stop **CHRONOGRAPH** with 2 push buttons
WRIST WATCH **$6.90**
Plus 69c Fed. Tax
1 YEAR WRITTEN GUARANTEE AND INSTRUCTIONS
GIVEN STAINLESS STEEL EXPANSION BAND

"Wonder" Watch. Used to time autos, airplanes, horse races, athletic events ● Tachometer ● Telemeter ● Hands & Nos. Glow in Dark ● Unbreakable Crystal ● Large Red Sweep Hand ● Tells Time ● Measures Speed & Distance ● Stop Watch ● Precision Made. SENT ON APPROVAL. Deposit $6.90 plus tax and postage with postman or send money order, save postage. (Same money back privilege.)

7-Day Money Back Guarantee

THE JEWELBOX, Dept. GB, 1674 Broadway, N. Y. 19, N. Y.

How to Make Money with Simple Cartoons

A book everyone who likes to draw should have. It is free; no obligation. Simply address

FREE BOOK

CARTOONISTS' EXCHANGE
Dept. 4812 Pleasant Hill, Ohio

ACCOUNTANT
BECOME AN EXPERT

Executive Accountants and C. P. A's earn $3,000 to $10,000 a year. Thousands of firms need them. We train you thoroly at home in spare time for C. P. A's examinations or executive accounting positions. Previous experience unnecessary. Personal training under supervision of staff of C. P. A's. Placement counsel and help. Write for free book, "Accountancy, the Profession That Pays."

LASALLE Extension University, 417 So. Dearborn St.
A Correspondence Institution Dept. 12334-H, Chicago 5, Ill.

Learn ELECTRIC APPLIANCE REPAIR AND SERVICE
FREE PLAN FOR YOUR SUCCESS

FREE BOOK

BIG PROFITS – BIG DEMAND for qualified men in field of Home Freezers, Washing Machines, Dishwashers, House wiring, Auto electricity, etc. Learn at home – start your own business. NO PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE NEEDED. Special tools & equipment furnished. Earn while learning. Write for YOUR FREE SUCCESS PLAN – ACT NOW!

PACIFIC TRAINING SCHOOL Dept. R912
7217 South Broadway • Los Angeles 3, California

INVENTORS

Patent laws encourage the development of inventions. Our firm is registered to practice before the U. S. Patent Office. Write for further particulars as to patent protection and procedure and "Invention Record" form at once. No obligation.

McMORROW, BERMAN & DAVIDSON
Registered Patent Attorneys
150-A Victor Building Washington 1, D. C.

OWN a Business

Clean and Mothproof rugs and upholstery "in the home or office building". Patented equipment. No shop needed. Duraclean Dealer's gross profits up to $15 and $20 a day on EACH service man. These Nationally Advertised services create repeat customers the year 'round. Easy to learn. Quickly established. Easy terms. Send today for FREE Booklet—explaining full details. No obligation.

Duraclean Co., 9-67D Duraclean Bldg., Deerfield, Ill.

Watch for this Popular Fiction Group seal on every magazine you buy. It is your one sure guide to good reading always!

FAMOUS FANTASTIC MYSTERIES

for that masterpiece of masterpieces, "Dian of the Lost Land".

Honestly, it was wonderful!

TERRY CARR.

134 Cambridge St.,
San Francisco, Calif.

P. S. I will also trade for old issues of S.S., L.W.S., S.S.S., *Future Fiction, Astonishing, Amazing,* etc. around '39 to '44.

"Counter Charm" Very Good

I am disappointed in your August issue story of "The Valley of Silent Men".

You see, I've always been an avid reader of fantasy magazines, and I can't see why you put a love story in. The "Counter Charm" was very good and consequently enjoyed. The novel, however, was just like reading a love story, which I and my husband detest. To compare the two stories of August issues would be like comparing "The Witch and Rumpelstiltskin" with a good "Dracula" story. The latter compares with the "The Counter Charm".

MR. & MRS. J. GLASS.

29 D'Arcy St.,
Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

Concerning Shiel

I've had the June issue of F.F.M. for nearly two months now, and I've just gotten up enough fortitude to drag myself through the last few pages of M. P. Shiel's classic of unutterable drudgery, "The Purple Cloud". It had three redeeming factors: the literary style was masterful; the wording was excellent; and Lawrence's illos were superb. But these were not enough to relieve the tedious repetition of the story. All there was, besides too-frequent exhortations to God, was an accumulation of dead bodies that smelled of peach blossoms! I certainly didn't expect any such thing as this from the man whose undeniably gifted hand penned "Children of the Wind", "Shapes in the Fire" and "The Prince Zaleski Stories".

The cover was—well, I can't say beautiful (egad, no!)—Compelling and intriguing. The illos on pages 10, 83, and 114-115 were the best.

Stan Mullen's short story was excellent, though it could have been longer.

I agree completely with Mr. Peeples about a fourth Popular Publications fantasy magazine devoted to new authors.

ROBERT E. BRINEY.

501 W. Western Ave.,
Muskegon, Mich.

P. S. Anyone desiring correspondence with me, please write. I will endeavor to answer all.

Back Number Mags His Hobby

I have been reading your magazines since it came out. During the war I missed quite a few copies. Yet I read some over and over again on the ships.

In 1946 I became ill. I kept my mind off my illness by collecting back numbers and got in

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

touch with several fans all over the country. Now I make a hobby and business out of it. I send your magazines to England (over hundreds of them).

I have considerable numbers of early back issues of science fantasy, F.F.M. and all British publications of science fiction and fantasy magazines, also early 1927 *Amazing*-1935, some *Astounding* and *Unknown*. Very reasonable.

JOSEPH RAUCH.

P. O. Box 1670,
San Francisco, Calif.

Very Satisfied

How's everybody up there on your 10th Anniversary? Incidentally, it's my 2nd with F.F.M., as I started with the Oct '47 issue. I have been very satisfied with every issue, some more than others, of course. I want to go along with the others on monthly issues, clipped edges, editor's pages, and anything else to improve our magazine. I like F.N. too, as it brings back all the stories I would probably never read otherwise—and keep the Merritts and Taines coming.

I cannot say much as to the stories I want to see printed as I have not read many fantasies out of your magazines, and if I had, I would rather see something new anyway. Please complete any trilogies in F.N. and other connected stories already started and keep on with the famous authors, Robbins excluded.

TOMMY SANDERS.

908 Herman St.,
Tell City, Ind.

News for Collectors

I have good news for all the science-fiction fans who are interested in buying, trading, or selling back issues of F.F.M. and other science fiction magazines and books. I am now a walking information bureau on this subject. Anyone interested in obtaining copies of this or any other magazine or book of this type, please send me a list of what you want, and what you have in exchange.

Those having books or magazines of this type for sale or trade please send me a list of them stating your price, or what you want in exchange for them. By doing this you may be able to get just what you want or sell or trade what you have without any delay. As I am in contact with fans all over the country who have mags or books for sale or trade, or else want some particular ones, and are willing to pay for them.

W. C. FRANKLIN.

Box 908,
Concord, N. C.

Seldom Disappointed

I have been reading fantasy fiction since 1928, and of course F.F.M. from the first issue.

SELL NYLONS GUARANTEED AGAINST RUNS!
Amazing guarantee gives FREE nylons if hose runt or snags within guarantee period to 8 months! All weights, sizes etc. including sheerest 15 denier. Not sold in stores. Nationally advertised in Life, Ladies Home Journal, Saturday Evening Post, McCalls, Women's Home Companion. Awarded Seal of Approval by Good Housekeeping. Also complete line of men's fine hosiery guaranteed ONE FULL YEAR or replaced FREE! No money or experience needed to earn big, steady income writing orders spare or full time. We deliver and collect. Advance cash plus huge bonus. Complete money-making sales outfits FREE and prepaid. No obligation. Rush name to: KENSEX COMPANY. Babylon, 59, N. Y.

NAUSEA due to high altitudes, speed and sudden changes, relieved with MOTHERSILL'S AIRSICK REMEDY ...Helps to control organs of balance. Quiets the nerves. THE WORLD OVER

Here's a Profitable BUSINESS FREE
MONEY MAKING OPPORTUNITY FOR YOU WITHOUT INVESTMENT
No experience needed to act as our Local Dealer for MASTER Work Uniform garments. Every business concern a prospect. Advertising embroidered on garments is a big sales feature. Easy, pleasant work. You receive cash commissions daily. You can easily earn up to many thousands of dollars per year. We supply all Sales Equipment FREE. Write
GEO. MASTER GARMENT CO., Dept. 126
Ligonier, Indiana

STOPS FOGGY WINDSHIELDS
NEW Chemical Mitt
Amazing Discovery! Autoists wild over new "NO-FOG" Windshield Cleaner. Simply glide over windshield chemically-treated Mitt—at once glass sparkles crystal clear. Blurry mist, frost, sleet, snow disappear like magic. Stops fogging. Sells like wild!
SAMPLES FOR AGENTS Sample offer sent immediately to all who send name at once. A penny postal will do. SEND NO MONEY—just your name. KRISTEE CO., 1444 Bar Street, AKRON, OHIO

DON'T PULL HAIR FROM NOSE
May Cause Fatal Infection
Use the Hollis KLIPETTE Rotating Scissors
You can cause serious infection by pulling hair from nose. Ordinary scissors are also dangerous and impracticable. No better way to remove hair from nose and ears than with KLIPETTE. Smooth, gentle, safe, efficient. Rounded points can't cut or prick skin.
So Simple! Just turn end. Surplus hair comes out easily, gently.
$1 Made from fine surgical steel. Chromium plated.
Guaranteed to Satisfy or Money Back
HOLLIS CO. • 45 Bruen Street, Newark 5, N. J. • Dept. C-12
Enclosed is $1.00 for KLIPETTE. If I am not entirely satisfied, I may return it within 10 days for refund.
Name _____ Address _____

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Saved my Life
"A God-send for GAS-HEARTBURN"
When excess stomach acid causes painful, suffocating gas, sour stomach and heartburn, doctors usually prescribe the fastest-acting medicines known for symptomatic relief—medicines like those in Bell-ans Tablets. No laxative. Bell-ans bring comfort in a jiffy or return bottle to us for double money back. ©
BELL-ANS for Acid Indigestion 25c

IF I Send YOU THIS FINE SUIT—
Will You Wear It and Show It to Friends?
I need a reliable man in your town to get a fine, made-to-measure, all-wool suit without paying cash, but by taking a few orders from friends. Wear it—show it—to help you take more orders with my line of over 100 guaranteed quality fabrics. You can make up to $12.00 in a day without experience or investment. I supply everything required FREE. Write today, giving age, etc., for FREE outfit. John Grant, STONE-FIELD Corp., 1330 W. Harrison St., Dept. Z-796, Chicago 7, Ill.

LAW
STUDY AT HOME for Business Success and LARGER PERSONAL EARNINGS. 40 years expert instruction—over 114,000 students enrolled. LL.B. Degree awarded. All text material furnished. Easy payment plan. Send for FREE BOOK—"Law and Executive Guidance"—NOW! [G. I. Approved.]
AMERICAN EXTENSION SCHOOL OF LAW
Dept. 21-B, 646 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago 11, Illinois

HOW TO MAKE MONEY IN PLASTICS
Learn Plastics at home, in spare time. You get 7 Big Plastics Material KITS with training course. Make useful, valuable articles as you learn. Send today for free illustrated catalog.
Plastics Industries Technical Institute
Dept. of West Coast University
1601 S. Western Ave., Dept. POF-129, Los Angeles 6, Calif.

High School Course at Home
Many Finish in 2 Years
Go as rapidly as your time and abilities permit. Course equivalent to resident school work — prepares for college entrance exams. Standard H. S. texts supplied. Diploma. Credit for H. S. subjects already completed. Single subjects if desired. High school education is very important for advancement in business and industry and socially. Don't be handicapped all your life. Be a High School graduate. Start your training now. Free Bulletin on request. No obligation.
American School, Dept. H949, Drexel at 58th, Chicago 37

TRAIN Your VOICE!
Results GUARANTEED
STRENGTHEN your voice this tested, *scientific* way. Yes—you can now build yourself a POWERFUL speaking or singing voice in the privacy of your own room. Silent self-training lessons; no music or piano required. Just send your name for sensational details of this amazing course. I'll send you FREE a vocal mechanism chart. State your age.
Perfect Voice Institute, 1141 S. Wabash Ave., Studio M-5, Chicago 5, Ill.

Get Well QUICKER
From Your Cough Due to a Cold
FOLEY'S Honey & Tar Cough Compound

FAMOUS FANTASTIC MYSTERIES

Haven't liked every story, but I bought every issue, except during the war. Always looked forward to the next magazine—seldom disappointed.

There has been some reason to criticize your choice of stories, perhaps, but more reason to applaud. The average has been so good that I prize my collection of F.F.M. (and F.N.).

I have thirty-two books by Edgar Rice Burroughs that I would like to swap for other fantasy books. Two are first editions in excellent condition.

BRADFORD M. DAY.

1411 DeKalb Ave.,
Brooklyn, 21, N.Y.

Wants More Space Operas

I have just read the novel in the June issue of F.F.M., "The Purple Cloud" by M. P. Shiel. There's not much to say—at least for basic criticism. In fact, there's really too much to unravel and explain. Far be it from me to attempt this, since there are arguments for and against "The Purple Cloud".

Shiel was a master of prose, which was borne out in this story. His plot rambles along, it seems to me, in the same manner of mood as the hero finds himself (who was, at the very least, odd). It was on the scale of an epic, a strange poetic study of a man's mind in its darkest and brightest moments. The story brought out the mental rather then the physical strain certain forces will produce under very powerful and unusual conditions.

Well, that's enough of Shiel, and while I agree that "Cloud" is a classic, let's not have Shiel again in the near future because of his overlong, tedious style.

"Mirror Maze" by Stanley Mullen was rather confusing but enjoyable. A little too short for a yarn of that kind, though. Mullen has an interesting style that reminds me of Bloch or Bradbury.

Incidentally, I agree wholeheartedly with Bennie Jacopetti on his opinion of "Scarlet Plague", and "Angel Island".

Oh, yes, the illustrations for "Purple Cloud" were a bit vague and decidely unfitted for the yarn's mood. Bok would have done nicely here.

In accordance with the usual pattern, here is my list of hopeful F.F.M. future yarns. "After A Million Years", by Garret Smith; "Space Raiders", by Barrington Beverly; "The Earth Tube" by Gawain Edwards; "The Man Who Rocked the Earth", by A. Train and H. R. Williams; "Storm Against the Wall" by L. Meynell; "Red Snow" by F. Wright Moxley; "The Gladiator" by Philip Wylie; "The Storm that Had to be Stopped", and "The Man Who Put out the Sun" by Murray Leinster; and "The Twenty-Fifth Hour" by Herbert Best.

In closing, I want to say—more space operas, please.

BING "LARRY" CLARKE.

Stamford, Conn.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

(Continued from page 105)

Allermuir set down the story to the shepherd's craziness and my friend's credulity. In Oxford his argument was received with polite scorn. An account of his experiences which he drew up for the *"Times"* was refused by the editor; and an article on "Primitive Peoples of the North," embodying what he believed to be the result of his discoveries, was unanimously rejected by every responsible scientific journal in Europe.

At first he bore the treatment bravely. Reflection convinced him that the colony had not been destroyed. Proofs were still awaiting his hand, and with courage and caution he might yet triumph over his enemies. But unfortunately, though the ardour of the scholar burned more fiercely than ever and all fear seemed to have been purged from his soul, the last adventure had grievously sapped his bodily strength.

In the spring that followed his accident he made an effort to reach the spot —alone, for no one could be persuaded to follow him in what was regarded as a childish madness. He slept at the now deserted cottage of Farawa, but in the morning found himself unable to continue, and with difficulty struggled back to the shepherd's cottage at Allercleuch, where he was confined to bed for a fortnight. Then it became necessary for him to seek health abroad, and it was not till the following autumn that he attempted the journey again. He fell sick a second time at the inn of Allermuir, and during his convalescence had himself carried to a knoll in the inn garden, whence a glimpse can be obtained of the shoulder of the Muneraw. There he would sit for hours with his eyes fixed on the horizon, and at times he would be found weeping with weakness and vexation.

The last attempt was made but two months before his last illness. On this occasion he got no farther than Carlisle, where he was taken ill with what proved to be a premonition of death. After that he shut his lips tightly, as though recognising the futility of his hopes. Whether he had been soured by the treatment he received, or whether his brain had already been weakened, he had become a morose silent man, and for the two years before his death had few friends and no society. From the obituary notice in the *"Times"* I take the following paragraph, which

MAKE EXTRA MONEY
SELL
Build Steady Repeat Business
No Investment — No Experience.
UNION LABEL BOOK MATCHES
direct from America's Largest Exclusive *Union Label Book Match Manufacturers.* We feature PETTY Glamour Girls, Scenics, handsome Dog series and NEW AD-DISPLAY DOUBLE BOOK MATCHES. Make BIG PROFIT QUICK. Write Today for SPECIAL OFFER and FREE POWERHOUSE selling kit.
SUPERIOR UNION LABEL BOOK MATCHES
SUPERIOR MATCH CO.
Dept. S-129, 7528 S. Greenwood, Chicago

TOOTHACHE?
Quick relief with Dent's. Use Dent's Tooth Gum or Dent's Tooth Drops for cavity toothaches. Use Dent's Dental Poultice for pain or soreness in gums or teeth. At all drug stores.
"Since 1888"
DENT'S TOOTH GUM TOOTH DROPS DENTAL POULTICE

Free Book
MOUNT BIRDS, ANIMALS, FISH
Yes, FREE. Explains Taxidermy. Tells how to learn at home by mail to mount birds, animals, heads . . . to TAN skins and furs. Great for MEN and BOYS. Fun! Also earn money in spare time. WRITE TODAY — NOW — for free book containing 100 game pictures. State AGE.
N.W. School of Taxidermy, Dept. 4212, Omaha, Neb.

MAIL Postal Today

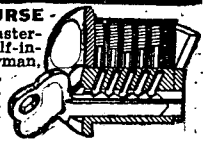
PSORIASIS
Now treated with internal medication
LIPAN ®
For several years a number of doctors have reported amazing success in treating Psoriasis with LIPAN—a new medical wonder taken *internally*. LIPAN is a combination of glandular substances that treat certain internal disorders which many medical men now agree to be the cause of Psoriasis. Clinical results show LIPAN successful in over 90% cases treated. Even stubborn lesions are alleviated to a degree almost beyond belief. *Absolutely harmless!* Ask your druggist for LIPAN, or write direct for free booklet. Or send for month's supply (180 tablets), enclosing check or money order for $8.50.
SPIRT & COMPANY, Dept. PF-12, Waterbury, Connecticut

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

locksmithing and key making

PRACTICAL UP-TO-DATE COURSE

How to pick locks, de-code, make master-keys, install, service, etc. New, self-instruction lessons for every handyman, home-owner, carpenter, mechanic, service station operator, fix-it shop, hardware dealer, gunsmith, cycle shop. Good steady money-making trade!



53 EASY ILLUSTRATED LESSONS

Full price only $3.95, nothing more to pay. Satisfaction or your money back. Fill in coupon at bottom of page and mail today.

NELSON-HALL CO.
1139 S. Wabash Ave. Chicago 5, Ill.

watch and clock repairing

LEARN AT HOME—IN YOUR SPARE TIME

Prepare now for a happy future of prosperity, security. Fascinating high-grade occupation for men of almost any age or physical condition. You can earn while you learn.

PRACTICAL COURSE IN HOROLOGY How-to-do-it lessons for beginners as well as those already in the trade. Thorough self-instruction training in American and Swiss watches, clocks. Contains a wealth of helpful photos, drawings, diagrams, charts, etc. Only **$4.95** for everything, complete. Satisfaction or refund guaranteed. Mail no-risk coupon below.

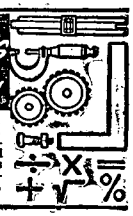
practical RADIO servicing

SELF-INSTRUCTION COURSE Teaches you the practical side of radio . . . repair, adjustment, operation, alteration, trouble-shooting. No previous knowledge necessary. Prepare to set up a shop of your own—or train for the big industrial electronics field. Simplified lessons, including mathematics, review questions, problems, answers. Up-to-date! Only **$3.95**, complete. Money-back guarantee. Use coupon below.

REAL ESTATE BUSINESS

The foundation of all wealth is land! Train yourself for a career in this booming profession. Here is the information you need on how to get started and how to get ahead in real estate. Includes instructions in appraisals, valuations, management, investments, practical real estate operating, low cost housing, the law on real estate transactions including legal forms, etc., salesmanship, and many other subjects a successful real estate man must know. Strictly up-to-date. Complete, only **$6.95.** Money-back guarantee. Use No-Risk coupon below.

Short-Cut Mathematics
COMBINED WITH
Practical Mechanics Simplified



Be a "master mind." Learn how to juggle figures, do baffling tricks with numbers. Add long columns of figures this lightning-quick, short-cut way. Multiply 4 figures by 4 figures without old-fashioned multiplication. Here are speedy, simplified systems used by stage "wizards," experts, engineers. Only **$1.49.** Course includes illustrations, problems, answers. Mail coupon below!

COMPLETE BLUEPRINT READING COURSE

Interesting, simplified self-instruction lessons for builders, mechanics, electricians, plumbers, welders, carpenters, automotive & aviation workers, etc. 24 volumes include over 600 actual blueprints, diagrams, other instructive step-by-step pictures. Unusual bargain for any practical man. Complete, only **$6.95,** postpaid. Satisfaction or refund. Coupon below.

BUILD IT YOURSELF

Be a practical handyman. Save time and money with these professional Tricks-of-the-Trade. Carpentry made easy! New self-instruction course in one handy volume, complete with full page photographs, diagrams, etc. Teaches woodworking, painting & decorating, upholstering, power tools, cabinet making, etc. Full price only **$1.98.** Money-back Guarantee. Mail coupon today!

Mail This No-Risk Coupon—Quick Action!

NELSON-HALL Co., 1139 S. Wabash Ave., Dept. M-5, Chicago 5, Ill.

Please rush me the items I am checking below. It is understood that if I am not 100% satisfied I will send the material back within 10 days and you will make full immediate refund, without question or quibble.

( )	Watch & Clock Repairing	$4.95
( )	Locksmithing & Key Making	3.95
( )	Practical Radio Servicing	3.95
( )	Real Estate Business	6.95
( )	Short-Cut Mathematics	1.49
( )	Blueprint Reading Course	6.95
( )	Build It Yourself	1.98
( )	Apartment House Management	5.95
( )	Jewelers' Encyclopedia	1.69
( )	How to Sell Life Insurance	6.95
( )	Complete Shorthand Course	4.95

☐ I enclose $.....in full payment. Ship postpaid.
☐ Ship COD for $.....plus postage and COD charges.

Name.....

Address.....

shows in what light the world had come to look upon him:

"At the outset of his career he was regarded as a rising scholar in one department of archaeology, and his Taffert lectures were a real contribution to an obscure subject. But in after-life he was led into fantastic speculations; and when he found himself unable to convince his colleagues, he gradually retired into himself, and lived practically a hermit's life till his death.

His career, thus broken off short, is a sad instance of the fascination which the recondite and the quack can exercise even over men of approved integrity and scientific ability."

And now his own narrative is published, and the world can judge as it pleases about the amazing romance. The view which will doubtless find general acceptance is that the whole is a figment of the brain, begotten of some harmless moorland adventure and the company of such religious maniacs as the shepherd and his sister.

But some who knew of the former sobriety and calmness of my friend's mind may be disposed timorously and with deep hesitation to another verdict. They may accept the narrative, and believe that somewhere in those moorlands he met with a horrible primitive survival, passed through the strangest adventure, and had his fingers on an epoch-making discovery In this case they will be inclined to sympathise with the loneliness and misunderstanding of his latter days. It is not for me to decide the question. Though a fellow-historian, the Picts are outside my period, and I dare not advance an opinion on a matter with which I am not fully familiar.

But I would point out that the means of settling the question are still extant, and I would call upon some young archaeologist, with a reputation to make, to seize upon the chance of the century. Most of the expresses for the North stop at Allerfoot, a ten-miles' drive will bring him to Allermuir; and then with a fifteen-miles' walk he is at Farawa and on the threshold of discovery.

Let him then follow the burn and cross the ridge and ascend the Scarts of the Muneraw, and, if he return at all, it may be with a more charitable judgment of the experience of my unfortunate friend.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

HEAR FULL YEAR WITH ONE "A" BATTERY!

FACTORY GUARANTEED

SEND FOR **FREE FACTS** without risking a penny!

WEAR STERLING SILVER *"Classic"* FOR BETTER HEARING

This revolutionary new hearing aid brings you clear, untroubled hearing through its exclusive new Microtone SOUND-SCREEN. In addition, with the perfection of the exclusive CAT-CELL, hearing aid battery expense and bother are reduced to next to nothing, because the MICRO-MIZER, furnished with each "CLASSIC", recharges the "A" battery while you sleep. The CAT-CELL is guaranteed for a full year. Start enjoying real living and real hearing now. Mail coupon direct to Microtone headquarters for prompt attention.

THE MICROTONE COMPANY

DEPT. J-10, FORD PARKWAY ON THE MISSISSIPPI • ST. PAUL 1, MINNESOTA

Please send me all the facts about the New "Classic" Hearing Aid and the Revolutionary "Cat-Cell". No obligation.

Name_____

Address_____

City_____ State_____

MICROTONE

HEARING AIDS

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

DRAW THIS GIRL AND TRY FOR

$1200.00 IN PRIZES

5 PRIZES: 5 Complete $240 Art Courses Including Drawing Outfits

Whether you win or not, contest judges will write you, if they feel you can develop your talent profitably. This contest is an easy-to-try way to find out if you have money-making art talent . . . and perhaps win a valuable prize. It's FREE. No fee. No obligation.

Big money now for trained illustrators and artists. Find out if YOU have profitable art talent. You've nothing to lose—*everything to gain*. Start your drawing now. Mail it today, with this coupon.

EASY RULES!

Amateurs only. Our students not eligible. Make copy of girl 5 ins. high. Pencil or pen only. Omit lettering. All drawings must be received by Dec. 31, '49. None returned. Winners notified. If desired, send stamped, self-addressed envelope and winner-list will be mailed to you.

ART INSTRUCTION, INC.

Dept. 11939 • 500 S. 4th St., Minneapolis 15, Minn.

• Please enter the attached drawing in your FREE $240 Art Course Contest. (Please Print)

Name_____ Age_____

Address_____ Phone_____

City_____ Zone____ County_____

State_____ Occupation_____

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED